

Kerry
Campaign
Takes
Huge
Boost
Page 17



VOL 13 NO. 219

Wednesday February 4, 2004

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National Alliance's State Secretary Edgar Lynch taking the oath in front of Governor of the Netherlands Antilles Frits Goedgedrag at the Governor's Palace Tuesday afternoon. Visible in the background at left is Richard Gibson, who was sworn in as Minister of Constitutional and Interior Affairs, with next to him Prime Minister Mirna Louisa-Godett. Photo courtesy Vigilante newspaper.

We believe in sharing, spirit of cooperation, says Marlin

PHILIPSBURG—National Alliance "relinquished" the portfolio of GEBE and Deputy Minister Plenipotentiary Marlin on Tuesday during the negotiations to join the federal coalition, because it believes in the "spirit of cooperation" and "sharing," said party Leader Senator William Marlin on Tuesday.

He accused the St. Maarten

Democratic Party (DP) of "abandoning" and treating former Deputy Minister Plenipotentiary Henri Brookson as a "piece of furniture."

National Alliance never stated that GEBE was a "sine qua non" in the negotiations, stated Marlin at a press conference Tuesday

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Cost-U-Less gets 6-month permit to import US beef

PHILIPSBURG—The Federal Department of Health has granted Cost-U-Less a six-month permit to import beef from the United States (US) under certain conditions.

The permit was granted last week and Cost-U-Less is required to seek permission from the federal health authorities before each im-

port, Managing Director Eric Vogtlander said. Vogtlander explained that Cost-U-Less was required to submit documents to health authorities before each import to get the green light for each shipment. The documents should prove that the shipment is free of BSE, also known as mad cow disease. On Tuesday Cost-U-Less brought in its first shipment of US beef since permis-

Continued on page 4

Lewd photos of schoolgirls taking island by storm

— Student wants circulation stopped —

PHILIPSBURG—Nude, partly nude and lewd photographs purportedly featuring at least three high school girls were reportedly the main talking point in several of the island's schools over the last two days and are taking the island by storm.

The photographs, reportedly taken by a male friend of the girls,

are being widely circulated primarily via an e-mail entitled "St. Maarten Girls Gone Wild." One report yesterday said copies of the photographs had been put on display in the washrooms at one of the schools.

Several parents and members of

Continued on page 3



A policeman leads a Chinese man out of a restaurant in Sucker Garden Tuesday afternoon. In total 11 persons were arrested yesterday, including a suspected smuggler of people. Photo by John Halley.

Suspected people-smuggler, 11 illegal Chinese arrested

PHILIPSBURG—Police arrested eleven persons of Chinese nationality, including a businessman accused of smuggling human beings, on Tuesday.

Immigration, aided by St. Maarten Voluntary Corps VKS officers, set out for several Chinese restaurants and supermarkets on Sucker Garden Road Tuesday afternoon. More than five lo-

cations were visited. At some locations one, two or three persons were arrested, while at others the raid yielded nothing. At the end of the day, the tally stood at 11 persons. They are all locked up at the police station.

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IN BRIEF

PHILIPSBURG PROPOSAL APPROVED

Finance Minister Ersilia de Lamnogy has approved a proposal made by St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to postpone payment of its NAF. 3.9 million debt to the Federal Receiver's Office for a two-year period. Page 3.

PHILIPSBURG LAWYER REBUKED

Lawyers in St. Maarten are reported to be astonished about the ruling of the Council of Supervision of the Joint Court of Justice of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba concerning a case brought to its attention about one of their colleagues. Page 4.

Marigot NINE GASES FOUND IN SANDY GROUND

The Sandy Ground Kindergarten and Elementary Schools have been closed indefinitely pending the outcome of analyses to determine whether nine gases found in the vicinity of the schools are toxic. Page 3.

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WEATHER

Today: Partly cloudy, with a chance of isolated showers.

Winds: Easterly, 10 to 15 miles per hour, with higher gusts.

Sea conditions: Moderate to choppy.
Wind force: 2 to 4, occasionally 5.

Waves: 2 to 5 feet.

Swells: North-Northeasterly to Northwest, 2 to 5 feet.

Barometric pressure: Above normal.
Barometric tendency: No significant change.

Forecast high: 29°C 84°F

Forecast low: 23°C 73°F

SYNOPSIS: A weak Atlantic high pressure is resulting in a generally fair weather pattern across the local islands. However, occasional patches of moisture and clouds will continue to move across the local region from time to time, resulting in intervals of cloudiness and a few showers. Otherwise, strong high pressure will build across the region from the Northeast through Saturday to produce a fresh trade wind flow and building seas.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK: None.

SPECIAL FEATURES: None.

Outlook until Thursday midday: Intervals of clouds and a few showers.

Rainfall probability: 30 per cent or less.

Rainfall potential: 1 to 2 mm, locally more.

Sunrise: 6:44am; **Sunset:** 6:08pm.

SMART PLAY SXM DAILY NUMBERS CURAÇAO

Winning Numbers Robbie's Lottery

CRUISE SHIPS IN PORT TODAY

Vessel Place Arrival Departure Agent
Norwegian Sky Pier 8:00 17:30 S.E.L. Maduro & Sons

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EMERGENCY 111
FIRE DEPARTMENT
Tel. 542-6001 or 120
HOSPITAL
Medical Center, Cay Hill
24-hour Emergency Service
tel. 543-1111

AMBULANCE
Philipsburg tel. 542-2111
Red Cross Building 545-5663
MEDICAL EMERGENCIES
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ST. MARTIN

TELEPHONE INFO
Tel-em: 542-2211
E. Caribbean Cellular: 542-4100
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ST. MAARTEN TOURIST OFFICE
W.G. Buncamper road, Vineyard
Building tel. 542-2337, fax 542-2734
ST. MAARTEN ZOO
Madame Estelle, tel. 543-2030
Open daily 10 am - 6 pm
October-March 9 am - 5 pm
Admission residents: Adults \$5, kids \$3, Non-residents: \$10/95.
Cole Bay Community Council: meeting 1st Thursday of month at SunPower Kinder Garden School, Union Rd. Cole Bay at 7:30pm
SERVICE CLUBS
ROTARY meeting at Port Little Bay Beach Resort, every Wednesday at noon. Rotary Middlemeets every Tuesday 6-8pm, The Daily Surf & Turf Restaurant, Maho Plaza 2nd level.
LIONS meeting at the Little Princess Quarter Community Centre Lions den in Sucker Garden every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 8pm.
ST. MAARTEN Leo Club meeting at Jubilee Library 1st, 3rd Friday every

Agenda St. Maarten / St. Martin

month at 6:30 pm.
KIWIANS meets at Wilfrid Building on Thursday - each month at 7:30pm.
Kiwanis Key Club of the St. Maarten Academy meeting at the St. Maarten Academy every Friday at 1:30 pm.
KIWIANS SOUTALIGA 1st & 3rd Monday 7:00pm Holland House
JAYCEEES meeting at the WIFOL Building every 1st Thursday of the month 8 pm.
ST. MAARTEN MUSEUM
Front Street 1, Philipsburg tel. 542-4917
Opening hours from March 1st Monday - Friday, 10 am to 4 pm.
Saturday 10 am - 12 noon
Sunday: closed
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8-10pm, Red Cross Building, Airport Road. Saturdays and Sunday at Mullet Bay beach next to restaurant 8:30-9:30am. Tel. 5571271 (ext 544-3203) (evening).
AIDS COORDINATOR Shanna van der Meer
tel. 542-0719 Health Department, e-mail: health@stmaarten.net
NATURE FOUNDATION ST. MAARTEN
Gap Bay Marina, Office Unit #1 P.O.B. 863, tel. 542-0120, fax 542-0268 Email: nature@stmaarten.net
PHILIPSBURG LIBRARY
c/o L.W. Hoger, 12, tel. 542-2970, open 10:00-18:00, tel. 542-2044/542-12304-30.

14-16 St. 901
WOMEN'S DESK Front Street 141 (opposite Col. Middel-Friday 9am-Spm Tel. 542-7940, Fax 542-7941.
E-mail: women@stmaarten.net
SPEE HUIZEN providing shelter and support to victims of family violence. Tel. 333.
CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT, E.C. Richardson street 116, tel. 542-1005/621088, fax 542-1001.
FRENCH HONORARY CONSUL, P.O. Box 803, Philipsburg Tel. (0590) 879989, Fax (0590) 879625. E-mail: Stanislas.GRAVE@wanadoo.fr
LEGAL AID CENTER, Law Clinic, open every Saturday 10:00am - 12:00 noon. Free advice on personal legal issues. Administration Building, tel. 542-2237.
Casagang NUSA (2nd) tel. 113
THE ST. MAARTEN RED CROSS, (2nd) #34 Airport Road Simpson Bay, tel. 542-5626/32304, fax 542-6233.
Email: redcross@stmaarten.net
SALVATION ARMY Unit 59 Cole Bay P.O. Box 1581 tel. 542-4452/4424 cell 547753, Sun 9:00am, Tue 7:00pm, Wed 6:30pm, 7:00pm, Sat 4:00pm.
ST. MAARTEN CHAPTER OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN holds its general monthly meetings, every third Monday at the Delta Hotel at 7:00 pm.
DIABETES INFORMATION CENTER A.T.A. High Road (behind Dutchkapelle building)
Free blood-glucose testing every Thursday from 5:30 - 7:00 pm.
USD (American St. Martin) (Santitas) contact

Jane Lambert 577410 fax 0590-8979404.
SKAL CLUB ST. MAARTEN meets 1st Tuesday of the month. For location call 542-4432 (Jemine).
ST. MARTIN
POLICE MUNICIPALE
tel. (0590) 590 87 50/14
GENDARMERIE
tel. (0590) 590 87 50/14
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tel. (0590) 590 87 50/08
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Office tel. (0590) 590 87 74/14
Home tel. (0590) 590 87 72/00
HOSPITAL tel. (0590) 590 87 67
DISPENSARIE Marigot
8 am - 3 pm, tel. (0590) 590 87 37/21
DISPENSARIE Orléans
8 am - 3 pm, tel. (0590) 590 87 37/21
C.R.O.S.S. CENTER, Research, Organization, Rescue, Security is on stand by 24 hours at 0594 709292.
SERVICE CLUBS
ROTARY meeting at Flamboyant Hotel, St. Martin, every Thursday at 8:15 pm.
LIONS First and Third Tuesday at Nardella, Marigot at 7:30 pm.
KIWIANS See St. Maarten.
MUSEUM ST. MARTIN
Facing the grand parking at Marina Royale - Marigot. Opening 9am-1pm / 3pm - 7pm, tel. (0590) 590 29 22 84.

Gases force closure of Sandy Ground schools

MARIGOT—The Sandy Ground Kindergarten and Elementary Schools have been closed indefinitely pending the outcome of analyses to determine whether nine gases found in the vicinity of the schools are toxic.

The presence of the gases was discovered during tests conducted by representatives of the state's health department DDASS.

Information about the findings was given during a meeting involving Muni-

pal and education department representatives, and members of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of both schools Tuesday.

DDASS conducted the tests after teachers and students complained last week about an unpleasant odor of gas that caused itching and "running eyes."

There had been several complaints in recent months resulting in school closures because of the same problem, but no thor-

ough test had been done before last week.

Health officials said they would need more time to make a complete survey of the entire Sandy Ground region to determine whether the problem was more extensive than they thought. In the meantime, they have recommended that both schools remain closed until the problem is fully analyzed.

PTA vice president Vivian Peterson has called for a thorough investigation into the matter and has accused the Mayor, DDASS and the Education Inspector of dragging their feet on the problem and not ordering a more in-depth test before.

Peterson said the gases around the school might also have been responsible for the death of four workers in 1984.

PTA member Julian Richardson joined Peterson in calling for a thorough analysis of the situation to ensure that the lives of Sandy Ground residents are not endangered because of toxic gas. "We have to make sure that we have not been contaminated and there are no after effects," one Sandy Ground resident said.

Peterson said the Mayor had suggested that students of the Sandy Ground schools alternate with Nina Duverly School. Parents will be informed on Friday and the PTA will be asking them to sign a petition to present to the DDASS calling for more tests to be carried out to make Sandy Ground safe.

Continued from page 1.

pictures. "We had a good time. When you love someone, you do anything for that person."

But, she added: "I never agreed for him to put them on the Internet."

She is concerned that she could be the next victim whose nude photos would be circulated via the Internet.

"Someone should put a stop to this," she pleaded. She said she had only learnt there were other girls when she heard about the "St. Maarten Girls Gone Wild," e-mail that is being circulated.

She said she hadn't filed a complaint with authorities because she was afraid, especially because her family didn't know, "I'm not afraid for me, I'm afraid for my family."

Asked about teaming up with the other girls whose photos have appeared on the Internet to press charges, she said: "The girls are not strong enough. We are at a vulnerable stage."

She also claimed that one of the girls was suicidal.



From left to right: SMMC board Vice Chairman Cornelius de Weever, Leader of Government Sarah Wescott-Williams, and SMMC General Director Dr. George Scot, Financial Director Cornelis van Spronsen, board Secretary Eveline Henriquez-Dijkhoff and board Chairman Emil Lee.

Agreement with Central Govt gives hospital breathing room

PHILIPSBURG—Finance Minister Ersilia de Lannooy has approved a proposal made by St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to postpone payment of its NAF 3.9 million debt to the Federal Receiver's Office for a two-year period, allowing the hospital to make the necessary investments and restructuring needed for sustainability.

Chairman of the board Emil Lee cautioned that while the agreement would give the hospital "breathing room" to reorganise internally and address structural issues, several other issues needed to be addressed, including structural solutions for uninsured patients, a change in the status of the institution from peripheral to central hospital and making cooperative agreements with other medical service providers on both sides of the island.

General Director Dr. George Scot said the agreement with the Federal Receiver's Office was just

one of several hurdles the hospital had to cross. He alluded to SMMC's outstanding debt to creditors as another hurdle, adding that this should be finalised in the not too distant future.

Leader of Government Sarah Wescott-Williams, who was also present at Tuesday's press conference, said she was happy that an agreement had been reached between the parties. She reminded that the Executive Council had decided last year to write off part of SMMC's debt to the Island Government and approved an increase in its tariffs, among other issues.

"The hospital is still not yet out of the woods. Several other matters need to be taken care of," she said. She announced that Windward Roads and Licom N.V. were among several construction companies assisting the institution to refurbish its operating theatre, the preliminary work of which is likely to start next week.

The medical center will be required to honour its current payment obligations to the Central Government during the two years. The agreement also addresses the medical treatment of prisoners, an evaluation after two years to determine SMMC's "payment potential" and the hospital's property owning foundation POF standing guarantee for the outstanding amounts.

Lee commended the efforts of the Executive Council, Lt. Governor Franklyn Richards and other stakeholders for their instrumental support in assisting the institution to reach the agreement.

"We are cautiously optimistic... but it looks as if there is light at the end of the tunnel," Lee told reporters Tuesday. "There are still some details that need to be resolved, but we believe these issues can be resolved before (its court date on) February 17."

Lewd photos

the public are incensed about the circulation of the pornographic material, but although one "concerned parent" has written the media condemning this development (Tuesday's issue of The Daily Herald), no formal reports have been filed with the police to date.

Meanwhile, one 17-year-old student who says nude photos of her were also taken by the same person who is believed to have taken the photographs of the other girls, now being circulated, told The Daily Herald Tuesday she wants action taken against the photographer before her pictures are also placed on the Internet.

The girl, who wanted to remain anonymous, alleged that last year she had been dating the photographer in question.

"He talked me into it. He is a really nice guy. He goes to church and he wasn't like other guys. I trusted him," she said.

The girl admitted that she had given consent to the photographer to take the

People smuggler

Continued from page 1.

At one of the locations, a man was arrested whom police suspect of being involved in smuggling human beings, particularly from China, stated police spokesman Inspector Johan "Janchi" Leonard. The suspect is the owner of a restaurant. Authorities didn't want to give more details, because the investigation is still ongoing.

Controls at Chinese supermarkets and restaurants will continue in the next days to look for some of the illegal persons whom the businessman is thought to have brought in, said Leonard.



Copies of the Red Cross Rehabilitation Reports for Hurricane Georges and Hurricane Lenny were recently presented to Lt. Governor Franklin Richards (third right) by regional director of the Windward Islands Red Cross District Bobby Velasquez (third left). Also in photo (left to right) are project coordinator W.I. Red Cross Marjon van der Steen; manager operation and support (Netherlands Red Cross) Sjoerd Tolma, Deputy Director (Netherlands Red Cross) Marc Hofstra; and Advisor (Netherlands Red Cross, Curaçao Section) Ydzer Z. Krauss. (GIS photo)

Lawyer dupes client, admonished by court

— Colleagues dismayed by leniency —

PHILIPSBURG—Lawyers in St. Maarten are reported to be astonished about the ruling of the Council of Supervision of the Joint Court of Justice of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba concerning a case brought to its attention about one of their colleagues.

Lawyer J.v.d.R., who recently established his own lawyer's office together with E. van D. in St. Maarten, allegedly falsified court documents to deceive his own client.

Someone reportedly instructed J.v.d.R. and paid him to handle a civil case, which was never done at all. The lawyer reportedly constructed a file in such a way that his client had the impression that his case had been taken care of after some months.

The truth was, however, that no judge had seen the file, as in reality it did not exist. The judgment came from a differ-

ent case, and J.v.d.R. apparently copied paragraphs from this ruling. He subsequently inserted these into the supposed ruling for his client to make it appear to his client that the latter had won the case. All other court documents were forged as well, this newspaper learned.

The lawyer's act caused great consternation among many of his colleagues, but the ruling of the Council of Supervision in the case seems to have caused even more dismay among them and the St.

Maarten community as a whole.

The fact that J.v.d.R. was only given an admonition by the Council of Supervision, whereas the other lawyers in St. Maarten had expected that he would at least be suspended for a long period of time or even disbarred, has left a very strange impression.

They are of the opinion that giving an admonition in a case like this is like giving approval for the reprehensible act that was committed.

Beef imports

Continued from page 1

sion was granted.

Cost-U-Less normally imports beef on a weekly basis, but Vogtlander said because of the conditions under which it is required to import, it cannot guarantee weekly shipment. "We got the permission to import because we could prove that

the beef we import does not have BSE," he said.

He said Cost-U-Less had made use of provisions in the law for importers to import products from a provider if it is approved by the United States Department of Health. In an earlier interview, he had assured that Cost-U-Less normally imported beef from a company in Colorado whose meat was approved by the US Health Department, was of good quality and was not affected by the mad cow disease.

Cost-U-Less sells primarily US products and Vogtlander said it wanted to continue to provide its clients with to which products they were accustomed. The Netherlands Antilles recently imposed a ban restricting the import of beef and beef products from the US due to the detection of mad cow disease there.

Marlin

Continued from page 1.

evening after his arrival from Curaçao, where a few hours earlier "his" Minister of Constitutional and Interior Affairs Richard Gibson and State Secretary of Justice Edgar Lynch had been sworn in.

"There was never a fight, a stand-off between my person and Mr. Woodley (Leader of DP-Statia, ed.)," said Marlin, explaining that there had been a meeting with Woodley and State Secretary Ernie Simmons, who has GEBE in his portfolio.

"We discussed it extensively and I am happy to report that the transfer of GEBE to St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius could be realized in this governing period. I have absolutely no problem with St. Eustatius having GEBE," he stated.

According to Marlin, "there is nothing wrong" with St. Eustatius having GEBE, because after all "they took responsibility" after St. Maarten's Democratic Party (DP) "abandoned" Winair and GEBE.

He accused DP of "throwing the proverbial baby away with the bath water" and of "abandoning a baby in a dark parking lot" when they stepped out of the coalition, leaving "important issues totally unattended." Besides Winair and GEBE, he mentioned St. Maarten Medical Center (SMCC), the ADC laboratory and SVB.

To the DP which he said would "gladly" accuse him of "giving up" positions, Marlin said: "You can't give away something you don't have. We went in with one seat, with nothing."

Relinquishing the position of Deputy Minister Plenipotentiary, formerly held by the DP, to DP-Statia would enable the people of St. Eustatius to "proudly, for the first time" appoint a person to that position in The Hague, said Marlin.

"I have told this to Curaçao as well, if you want to hold on to power, you must be able to share. We believe in the spirit of cooperation," he said.

Marlin said one of the reasons for relinquishing the Deputy Minister Plenipotentiary post was to prevent "crisscross" plans of St. Maarten establishing its own "St. Maarten House" in Holland. He criticized the DP for "begging" the Central Government to rent office space for Brookson at "Antillean House" as St. Maarten's representative in Holland.

"If we really want to show

The Hague that we want to have our own representation, we should be bold and brave enough to establish a St. Maarten House, instead of crawling to the Central Government, begging them for a favour. If the DP was honest and sincere in getting St. Maarten ready to step out, we say, no matter how small, to rent your own space and put in big and bold letters 'St. Maarten House,'" said Marlin.

Putting Brookson in a "small office in the back" of the Antillean House is "insulting and degrading to the people of St. Maarten," he said. He said DP was treating Brookson as "a piece of furniture" and National Alliance wouldn't support that. Marlin announced that he had received the draft governing programme, National Alliance and the other new coalition partner, DP-Bonaire, have a week to

make suggestions. "It is like a moving train with some passengers that got on and some that got off," he said.

"We have two years left and if we try to stall the process again, by bickering and fighting, we may be arguing until the term has ended and nothing has been realized for St. Maarten. St. Maarten is back with representation in the Central Government. We are players on a team and we will get things done for St. Maarten," he stated.

"Focus will 'very much' be on constitutional change, aimed at a status outside the Netherlands Antilles. He said he was confident that would be realized with "two good, hardworking people," meaning Gibson and Lynch.

He announced that a welcome home reception would be organized for this Sunday. The time and place of that event will be announced later.

Six months conditional for sex with a minor

PHILIPSBURG—The Court sentenced a 28-year-old man on Tuesday to a conditional jail penalty of six months with two years' probation for sex with a minor.

Prosecutor Paul Mooij, who had asked for a six-month unconditional penalty plus 12 months conditional with two years' probation, may consider appealing the sentence handed down by Judge Frank Wieland for Curaçaoan Joseph Fernando Priest.

The judge's reasoning for the lenient penalty was that the girl had only six months to go before reaching the age of 15, when consensual sex is legally allowed.

He also said it was a matter of awareness. "She was a pretty clever HAVO 3 student, knowing well what she was doing. It's good that there is a law, but protection of minors starts at home. There should be some awareness here as well."

Priest denied that the girl had told him she was 13 when they first had sex, as she had apparently told the investigating authorities. According to the police report, the girl had also told them that she and Priest had consensual sex three or four times and he had always worn a

condom.

"I understood from her behaviour that she was 15 or 16 and she told me that she was 17," Priest told the court yesterday.

According to Mooij, it was not the girl, but her father who filed a complaint with the police that Priest had had sex several times with his daughter.

Mooij said he had in particular taken into consideration the age difference between Priest and the girl. "When they had sex, he was almost twice her age and should have known better," Mooij said.

"It is very important that the law protect young girls. Pregnancies can disrupt their young lives. We have to send out a signal to the community that this cannot be allowed. Okay, you took precautions, but it is still shameful, seeing the difference of age," he told Priest.

Defence lawyer Jairo Bloem said his client had tried to speak to the girl's father to apologize, but he had refused any contact. He also said his client had been held at the police station 36 days, twice as long as legally allowed, and six more months in prison would seriously affect his client's life. "My client and the girl don't see each other anymore," Bloem said.



Commissioner responsible for Airport Affairs Sarah Wescott-Williams (at far end of table) attended a meeting of the Supervisory Board of Directors of the Holding and Operations Companies of Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) last Friday at which a wide range of issues, including the airport expansion project, were discussed. (GIS photo)

Fleming gets 16 months for illegal gun, fencing vehicle

PHILIPSBURG — St. Maartener Charles Edmond Fleming (28) was sentenced on Tuesday to an unconditional jail penalty of sixteen months. Judge Frank Wieland in the Court of First Instance found Fleming guilty of having carried around a gun without a permit and intentionally fencing a car.

Fleming apparently had an accident with a car that an attentive insurance agent recognized as being a stolen rental. When police came to Fleming's home to investigate the matter they saw a second rental car that had also been stolen, for which he was not indicted. However, the prosecutor took it into account, especially as the suspect's criminal record showed that he had been sentenced previously for fencing a stolen car.

Prosecutor Paul Mooij demanded 12 months for the illegal possession of a gun and eight months for the fencing of the car, but he granted a reduction of four months because Fleming had been held in police cells much longer than legally allowed.

Defense lawyer Jairo Bloom pleaded for a less severe punishment for his client, saying his client had received the keys of the car and therefore could not have known that it had been stolen, although his client had admitted he had borrowed it from a well-known car thief "Carlos."

Bloom further considered the prosecutor's one-year demand for the gun too se-

vere.

Bloom said his client had been driving the car that appeared to have been stolen on and off without realizing that it had been stolen, and one of these times had been at the funeral of his murdered friend "Moondoggie" on November 21, 2002.

Fleming told the Court he had carried the gun because

he felt seriously threatened. However, Prosecutor Mooij said carrying a gun was a serious offence, in particular considering the rising number of deaths on the island as a result of shootings.

The judge agreed with the prosecutor's point of view and sentenced Fleming in accordance with the demand of 16 months.

June target for beach promenade phase two

PHILIPSBURG — The target date for the start of the second phase of the Great Bay beach promenade from Captain Hodge Wharf to Sea View Hotel is June. Economic Affairs and Tourism Commissioner Theo Heyliger stated on the Lloyd Richardson show last Sunday.

The second phase should take about three months to be completed.

Along with the project's second phase of laying 200 to 300 metres of the promenade, beach replenishing work will be carried out in that area. The entire Great Bay beach was replenished about seven years ago.

Continued replenishing is necessary to maintain the beach, which is a vital part of the economic activities car-

ried out in Philipsburg. Heyliger said. This aspect of the project should not be as expensive as it was in the past.

Commenting on the reason for stopping the promenade at Sea View Hotel, he said there were mostly residential properties beyond the hotel and discussions had to take place with those families to establish how economically viable it would be to continue further. Eventually, the promenade will reach as far as Sea Palace.

The commissioner is confident that with the continuation of the promenade, the area beyond Captain Hodge Wharf would become as bustling with business and activity as the first phase from Bobby's Marina to the wharf.

Judge sticks to travel ban for drug mules

PHILIPSBURG — The Prosecutor surprised the judge in the Court of First Instance on Tuesday morning when he asked for a five-month jail penalty in addition to another five months suspended and a two-year probation for a drug mule, instead of asking for a travel restriction and withholding of the passport for one year.

As the latter had been the prosecutor's policy two weeks ago, Judge Frank Wieland rejected the demand for a jail penalty. Instead, he handed down a travel prohibition of one year and confiscation of the passport for the same period for Ideline Jacqueline Dorothea.

The relatively new rule means that after Dorothea has been sent back to Curaçao she is not allowed to leave that island for 12 months, while her passport will be kept at the prosecutor's office for the same period.

The 19-year-old Curaçaoenean drug mule was nabbed at Princess Juliana International Airport with two packets of cocaine containing 420 grams each.

She said in court that she had been offered US \$1,000 for taking 800 grams of cocaine on the plane to St. Maarten. "They told me it would be very easy," she said.

When Judge Wieland remarked that if it would indeed have been so easy, why had the drug bosses not transported the stuff themselves, Dorothea said she had first made a test flight with the woman who asked her to transport the cocaine and nothing had been asked then.

In the afternoon, prosecutor Mooij explained to The Daily Herald that pending the conclusion of a joint

policy with judicial authorities in Curaçao, it had been decided not to request the confiscation of the passports of drug smugglers.

Mooij added that the policy to legally regulate the confiscation of passports would hopefully be completed shortly.

In addition to the hearing of one Curaçaoenean drug mule in the morning, several Antillean and non-Antillean bolita-swallowers were heard in the afternoon.

Except in one case where the Judge's verdict contained a travel restriction for what could be termed humanitarian reasons, he went along with the prosecutor's requests for jail penalties.

Curaçaoenean Ruddy Giovanni Francisco Inecia (26) was sentenced to five months and two months conditional with a two-year probation for swallowing 35 bolitas containing cocaine.

Wilfred Cesario Clemensia (39), also of Curaçao, was accused of swallowing 420 grams of cocaine bolitas and was given five months, of which three were suspended, with a two-year probation.

Father and son James Leroy Peterson (47) of Anguilla and James Alexander Peterson (25) of Curaçao

told the judge they were about to lose their home and they were both unemployed. So, they said, they had been forced to try to smuggle the drugs to get money. They were caught with a total of 930 grams of cocaine contained in bolitas. They received five-month sentences with two months conditional and two years' probation.

Railly Alexander Hersilia (18) of Curaçao received a 12-month sentence, six months of which were conditional, and a two-year probation along with the confiscation of US \$88 and an airline ticket, which he had intended to use to travel to Holland with 52 bolitas.

The judge ordered the confiscation of the passport belonging to Urcheny Lucio Vrutal and gave him a 387-day sentence, of which 365 were conditional. Vrutal is not to travel outside of Curaçao for 12 months, during which time his passport will remain in the possession of the Prosecutor's Office.

He told the judge he had tried to smuggle the drugs because his child was terminally ill and in need of an operation. Vrutal intended to leave for Curaçao today, Wednesday.

AGENDA

ST. EUSTATIUS
Police Station 182333
Emergency 111
Hot Line 108
Fire Department 120
Hospital 182211/182371
Landsraad 182210
Post Office 182207
St. Eustatius Historical Foundation Museum 182288
Winair Office 182362
Lions Club meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday at the "Den" next to the Airport
Drug Prevention Foundation meets every Tuesday 5:30pm at the Golden Era Hotel.
Coastguard NA&A 113
St. Eustatius National parks: Callows Bay: 3182884

SABA
Police Station
 The Bottom, tel. 4163237
Emergency 111/112
Hospital
 The Bottom, tel. 4163288/4163289
Fire Department Airport
 Flat Point tel. 4162210
SATEL
 The Bottom, tel. 4163211
WINAIR Airport
 Flat Point, tel. 4162255/2713
Tax Service Airport
 Flat Point, tel. 160
Administration Building
 The Bottom, tel. 4163311
Tourist Office
 Windwardside, tel. 4162231
Harbour Office
 Fort Bay, tel. 4163294
Saba Marine Park
 Fort Bay, tel. 4163295
Nature & Hike Guide
 James Johnson
 The Bottom, tel. 4163307
Service Club
 Saba Lions Club general meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday 8:00 p.m. at Eugénus A. Johnson Center.
Coastguard NA&A 113
Red Cross
 General meeting every 1st Monday, 6 p.m. Eugénus A. Johnson Center.

ANGUILLA
EMERGENCY
Police 911
Fire 911
Ambulance 911
Police Station 497 2333
Hospital 497 2551
Dental clinic 497 2343
Radio Anguilla 497 2218
Tourism Department 497 2759
Crimstoppers 8000 777 7771
ARLINS
American Eagle 497 2551
Winair 497 2748
Lion 497 5080
Tylen Air 497 2719
Air Anguilla 497 2643
Trans Anguilla 497 2609
COURTESY SERVICE
DHL 497 3400
Federal Express 497 2719
497 2239
SERVICE CLUBS
Rotary Club of Anguilla
 The Restaurant 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Every Thursday.
Soroptimist International
 Day Care Centre
 4:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday in each month Tel: 497 3509
Lions Club
 The Valley Primary School
 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8:00 p.m.
 Tel: 497 3559
National Council of Women
 Arts and Craft Centre
 4:30 p.m. 1st Monday in month.
Interact Club of Anguilla
 Meets every Friday at 3.15 p.m. at the Albena Lake Lodge
Comprehensive School
Alcoholic Anonymous meetings every Sunday at 8:30 am and Monday at 5:00 pm on Shoal Bay picnic area.



Statia Lt. Governor Hyden Gittens

Lt. Governor Gittens expresses appreciation

ST. EUSTATIUS—Lt. Governor Hyden Gittens expressed his appreciation to the public of Statia for the warm reception extended to him and family on his arrival to the island, in a radio programme on Monday.

Gittens said his first three weeks in office had been happy ones and things were going very well. He said the cooperation within the Executive Council had been good thus far.

He also said he had held several meetings with department heads and had visited many sites to get first-hand experience of what was going on and to let people know the man he really is. "Involvement is the key," he said.

Gittens aims to have more town hall meetings, the drawing of a master plan in the next three months and many other developments.

He said he had been disappointed when the first Island Council meeting he called had to be adjourned due to a lack of quorum. He said the meeting should have

taken place within seven days, according to the law, but opposition leader Clyde van Putten would be off-island in connection with his wife being ill. The meeting has now been set for next Wednesday, starting at 3:30pm.

Gittens touched on the Governor's Mission, saying much work still had to be done before he and his family would be able to move there. He also said that his office will be open to the public by appointment on Wednesday afternoons.

Ministers asked to investigate irregularities at Nieuwe Post

PHILIPSBURG—The Windward Islands Civil Servants Union (WICSU) has asked Justice Minister Ben Komproe and Minister of Transport and Communication Richard Salas to investigate irregularities at Nieuwe Post N.V. A WICSU member was dismissed from the Post Office because he managed

Director rings alarm bell

National Museum in dire financial straits

WILLEMSTAD—The National Archaeological Anthropological Museum (NAAM) is in dire financial straits and NAAM Director Ietke Witteveen is ringing the alarm bell.

She said that the Museum had not received any money from the Central Government for 2004 so far, nor had it received funding to complete its projects for 2003.

Witteveen stated in a press release that the lack of funding meant that the work for the country's cultural inheritance, considered one of the basic tasks of the Central Government, threatened to stagnate.

"The Foundation NAAM cannot pay its staff of three, its debts nor the cost for the security guards who keep an eye on the buildings that contain historical collections," Witteveen insisted.

She added that the annual subsidy for NAAM had been reduced by 10 per cent in August last year, despite strong protests from the National Museum management and staff. This cutback of the subsidy came after and on top of the reduced NAAM subsidies for previous years.

"The situation is in contrast with the spirit of the present Governing Programme

'Welensli' 2003-2006. This programme stated very clearly that the Foundation NAAM would be strengthened as a national institution with specific tasks towards the cultural inheritance," said Witteveen.

She pointed out that the cultural development of the country appeared to be an item for economizing, while everyone knows how important cultural development is to strengthen identity, to stimulate motivation, civil pride and a feeling of "em-pow-erment".

Frequent telephone calls to the Department of Education and Culture and to the Department of Finance have not resulted in solving the dire financial situation of the Foundation.

"Even though NAAM has timely met all of its obliga-

tions, such as the annual report, car contract, cooperation agreement and subsidy requests, the fact is that the coffers of the National Museum are empty," Witteveen stated in the release.

NAAM has contributed to The Daily Herald's weekly Section B, Culture & Leisure on a regular basis through well-written articles and quality photos on a wide range of cultural issues from all the islands of the Netherlands Antilles.

The last article received from NAAM, "Christmas carolling tradition in St. Eustatius," was printed in the Christmas Special on December 24, 2003. The most recent article deals with the Big Drum or, in Papiamentu, Tambo Grandi and will be printed in one of the next editions of Section B.

Dave has 25 years Government service

SABA—Dave Levenstone commemorated 25 years of government service on Monday, sixteen for the Central Government and nine for the Island Government, he stated in a release Tuesday.

Levenstone said he had started off as Head of the Federal Bureau of Culture in Saba and "it seems like yesterday that I started to work with government."

He said he had built up a vast amount of experience and knowledge in the service of government during the 25 years.

"I have had a good governmental upbringing and I have been privileged to have worked among many who are now on retirement," Levenstone stated.

Among other positions that he held in government service, he worked at the Department of Culture, the Insular Department of Labour in St. Maarten, Department of Public Works in Saba, Police Force of the Netherlands Antilles and Postal Service of the Netherlands Antilles in Saba.

He was Parliamentary Assistant to Senator Will Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Commissioners from 1995 to 1998, and from then until now has been Chief Protocol Officer of the Island Government.

Levenstone said, among



Dave Levenstone

other things, that he had been the first Parliamentary Assistant to be appointed in the Netherlands Antilles in 1988, and the first Executive Assistant to be appointed in Saba.

He has also represented the Island Government of Saba on several committees on the island and abroad, and has also been involved in local politics.

Levenstone said he looked forward in putting in at least two to three more years, as he did not intend to work all of his life for government.

"There is too much bickering, undermining and hypocrisy within government service and this needs to stop if we are to attract young qualified Sabans," he said. "We need our own people to return and hold positions such as Lt. Governor, Island Secretary, Police Officers, Doctors, teachers and other positions."

Worker can be fired without permission in certain cases

PHILIPSBURG—Head of the Federal Labour Office Kenneth Lopes says a company can dismiss a worker without seeking permission from the Labour Office only under certain circumstances. He said a company could dismiss a worker without permission for "urgent reasons" such as stealing, fighting, threats, etc.

A worker can also be fired without permission at the end of his/her contract or during the probation period. In all other cases, permission has to be sought from the Federal Labour Office.

The Windward Islands Civil Servants Union (WICSU) has accused the management of Nieuwe Post NV of not adhering to labour regulations when it dismissed one of the union's members from the Post Office recently because of "violation of trust."

Lopes said he was aware of the issue through correspondence he had received from WICSU seeking his intervention in the matter. He said he had not received any correspondence from management on the matter as yet, so could not say whether it had sought permission to dismiss the employee(s) in question.

Asked what the Labour Department would do under such circumstances, Lopes said he would approach management on its reasons for dismissing the worker(s) and if the reason was, in his judgement, not good enough, the management would be given advice as to what steps to take. He said the Labour Office could not "force" an employer to reinstate a dismissed worker, but could advise them to do so.

On the other hand, he said, a dismissed workers could take their employers to court if they believed they had been wrongfully fired. "The employer must be able to defend that the particular employee was fired for an urgent reason," said Lopes.

WICSU, whose member was one of two employees dismissed from the Post Office because management believed she had violated their trust, claims its member was dismissed without justification. The union sought Lopes' intervention in the matter and asked Justice Minister Ben Komproe and Minister of Transport and Communications Richard Salas to investigate irregularities at the Post Office.



UFA adviser Willie Haize was recently in Curaçao for the meeting of the Socio-Economic Council SER on the proposed increase in the old age pension AOV and how to pay for it. He took the opportunity to see his friend FOL leader Anthony Godett.

Heyliger commends Customs Department

PHILIPSBURG—Commissioner responsible for Tourism and Economic Affairs Theo Heyliger praised the Customs Department of the Windward Islands for what he said was "a job well done with respect to dealing with narco-trafficking."

He was commenting on a report published in The Daily Herald in which Chief Customs Officer George Martis reported significant successes by Customs in the fight against trafficking in illicit substances.

The Government Information Services quoted Heyliger as saying he wished to commend "our Customs officers for the disruptions that they have caused in the process of drug trafficking, (for) drug abuse has its consequences for society which are devastating."

He continued: "Our men and women in law enforcement need the continued support of our community in order to be able to con-

tinue being successful in interception and seizure of narcotics at our ports of entry. Our society will not tolerate or condone this type of activity."

Three years for domestic abuse

PHILIPSBURG—In a case of domestic abuse, Dominican Leonardo Herrera-Villafana (39) was sentenced to 36 months in prison, of which 12 months were suspended, with a probation of two years.

Judge Frank Wieland deemed it proven that Herrera-Villafana had ill-treated his girl friend L.S., also from the Dominican Republic, with whom he had lived for seven years, by hitting her several times on the head with a piece of iron.

Following this ill-treatment, the suspect and a friend of his had taken the lady to St. Maarten Medical Center, which in turn had called the police.

The doctor found that L.S. had sustained a 10-centimetre cut on the forehead, another 10-centimetre injury near her right ear and multiple other wounds, some with severe bleeding.

It appeared in Court that the female victim in her anguish had promised her attacker not to file a complaint if he would transport her to the hospital.

According to the medical report, the severe beating could have killed her, but

Judge Wieland said this did not necessarily account for the legal term of "severe ill-treatment" which the prosecutor had used to also demand 26 months, of which 12 months were conditional. Judge Wieland said the reason he had sentenced Herrera-Villafana was that even though the ill-treatment had legally been less severe and the lady had been sent home after the hospital treatment, the man's arrogant attitude in court had been shocking.

"I am surprised that you show no remorse at all at what you did. Instead, you are reversing the whole case in the sense that you regard yourself the victim of a woman for whom you had given up everything. You would not treat a stubborn animal in the same manner as you treated this lady."

Herrera-Villafana said he had come home on November 16, 2003, and found his wife naked in bed with a man who was also naked. However, a witness told the authorities the suspect had not left his home all day and had been drinking rum steadily.

Plans for peaceful march on track, permits awaited

PHILIPSBURG—Plans for a peaceful march against corruption, discrimination and intimidation, set for Saturday, February 14, on all of the Antillean islands, are on track and permits are being awaited from the five LT Governments.

According to organizer Attorney Eric de Vries, the march in St. Maarten starts off at Cyrus Wathey Square in Philipsburg, goes up Front Street to Ennamplein, down Cannegieter Street and ends at Clem Labega Square. Start time is 11:00am.

For neighbouring islands of Saba and Statia, the start points are The Bottom and Oranjestad respectively.

The march is being organized as a sign of the frustration of the people of the Antilles with the present political situation in the

country. The idea for this civil action was promoted via e-mail and has garnered the support of more than 1,000 persons on the various islands.

For persons who are unable to take part in the march, the organizer suggested that support can be shown by turning on vehicle lights to coincide with the march or hoisting a flag.

De Vries maintains that the march is not affiliated with any political party or organization, but is "a march of the people."



Cunard's Queen Mary II, the largest cruise ship in service. (Photo from www.cunard.com)

Queen Mary II to visit St. Maarten March 3

PHILIPSBURG — The world's largest and newest cruise ship Queen Mary II (QM2) will make its inaugural visit to St. Maarten on Wednesday, March 3, according to ship agent S.E.L. Maduro and Sons.

The vessel, on its maiden voyage, visited neighbouring St. Kitts on Tuesday. The ship set sail from its home port Southampton, England, to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a 14-day journey, on Monday, January 12.

Cunard Line's QM2 is the largest, longest, tallest, widest and most expensive ocean liner ever built. Its length is 1,132 feet and height (keel to funnel) is 236.2 feet. The passenger capacity is 2,620 and it has a crew of 1,253. The cost of the vessel is estimated at US \$800 million.

The ship will spend its inaugural year cruising in Eu-

rope, the Atlantic Ocean and the Americas. During the winter, QM2 will visit the Caribbean and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for Carnival. The record-breaking ship makes her maiden six-day eastbound transatlantic crossing in tandem with her

sister vessel the Queen Elizabeth II in April. Cunard hails this as another historic event, as it will be the first time two "Queens" will greet each other in the North Atlantic since the forerunners Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary in 1967.

Student government to hold retreat in March

PHILIPSBURG — The Student Government Association (SGA) of University of St. Martin (USM) will determine its objectives for the year during a "leadership retreat" that is likely to be held in Saba in March, SGA President Stuart Johnson says.

The SGA board will travel to Saba for a night for the retreat and will discuss its goals and objectives for the

year.

"During the retreat we will come up with strategies to enhance SGA leadership and the university," said Johnson. "We will also determine how the skills of our ambassadors could be enhanced. They are the main students guiding the younger ones."

A tentative date of March 6-7 has been set for the retreat, said Johnson.

Heyliger wants WTO to study impact of flight cancellations

PHILIPSBURG — Commissioner responsible for Tourism and Economic Affairs Theo Heyliger says he plans to send a letter to Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) Francesco Frangialli requesting that a study be made of the impact of the recent cancellations of transatlantic flights for security reasons.

"I have some concern with respect to the possible impact this will have on international travel and tourism. I would like the WTO to do a study with respect to this," the Government Information Service (GIS) quoted Heyliger as saying Tuesday.

He continued: "The first priority is always the safety of the travelling public and decisions taken to cancel flights are exceptional measures that must be taken in order to safeguard the travelling public."

U.S.-bound flights of British Airways, Air France and Continental were cancelled for February 1 and 2 over the weekend due to intelligence that the United States said suggested a threat of possible terrorist attacks against U.S.-bound aircraft.

Six Air France flights to Los Angeles, California, were cancelled in December because of similar information. There were also flight cancellations and delays in early January.

Heyliger said the survey could reveal possible new travel trends that could lead to new opportunities for

tourism destinations.

He noted that the British Airline Pilot's Union has requested the British Government to examine the strength, validity and quality of intelligence that had led to the cancellation of the transatlantic flights.

"I understand their concern, as it could affect global travel if flight cancellations

become a regular affair. This in turn will result in airlines losing money as travellers decide to take more vacations within Europe," the commissioner explained.

He continued: "We have to look at the 'what-ifs' in order to be prepared to deal with the challenges of the near future, which is in our national interest."

Pantophlet questions plans to outsource health administration

PHILIPSBURG — National Alliance Councilman George Pantophlet is questioning government's move to outsource the health care administration and, pending this, to extend guarantee cards until April 1.

In a letter dated December 10, 2003, Pedro Arrindell and Jorien Lucas-Wille of Sector Health Care Affairs (SHCA) informed

government's sector directors and directors of government-subsidized institutions that the guarantee cards would be extended for a period of three months.

"The reason for this extension is secondary to the preparation plans for likely outsourcing the health care administration very shortly," the letter stated. "As such there would be no need for a new guarantee card for the year 2004."

Pantophlet announced on Tuesday that he planned to send the Executive Council

a letter on this matter. He will be asking government to whom the health care administration will be outsourced and why.

Pantophlet also wants to know when government plans to do this and for how long, as well as what will happen to the persons working in the department that deals with medical care for civil servants.

"What has to be realized is that outsourcing of anything that pertains to government has financial consequences. In essence we are talking about the budget being affected," he stated, adding that the budget needed the approval of the Island Council.

According to Pantophlet, the matter should be discussed in the setting of the Central Committee. He said he hoped his faction would be informed directly by government, instead of through the media.

Outstanding Youth Award ceremony set for March 6

ST. PETERS — The first St. Maarten Outstanding Youth Award (SMOYA) ceremony and dinner are scheduled at Le Belle Vie Restaurant, Port de Plaisance, for March 6. Eleven youngsters will receive awards from the St. Maarten Youth Council Association for their outstanding academic and other achievements.

The youngsters will be honoured in the six categories of academics, sports, personal improvement, community, environment, culture and music. The nominees are Romeo Brown, Hasani Ellis, Vicario Ellis, Emmy Franck, Miltsa Gtersen,

Colin Hamer, Vanessa Hunt, Stuart Johnson, Calvin Mardenbrough Jr., Ayana Tyrell and Alexis Williams.

The award recognises and honours young people ages 16 to 21 who demonstrate the best qualities of St. Maarten youth. The objective of this programme is to encourage young people on the island to strive for excellence while highlighting their talents.

Tickets for the dinner cost US \$35 per person and are available from the youth council office at Rupert I Maynard Youth Community Centre, from council members or by calling 555-8971.



Beryl Lake (second left) and Jadira Veen (third left) with some Grade 6A students and the donated plants.

St. Maarten Pride gives plants to school

HOPE ESTATE—St. Maarten Pride Foundation, an environmental and anti-litter group, donated thirteen plants to M. Genevieve de Weever School in Hope Estate yesterday.

Nine ficus trees, which make a great hedge, and four banana plants were presented to Vice Principal Beryl Lake and the students

of Grade 6A by Foundation President Jadira Veen and Vice President Alita Singh.

The plants, in pots at present, will be placed into the ground during this week. A few have already been taken care of by the students, as the school does not have a gardener.

This school has lacked greenery for some time now,

the foundation representatives said. Several almond trees were planted on the premises after the school was fenced last year.

The ficus plants were given to the foundation by Mr. and Mrs. Max Phipela.

Pride Foundation worked with the school for several cleanup and other activities and had already donated several plants, including banana plants that are thriving well at present.

Lake thanked the foundation for its donation and continued support of the school and its students. The students promised to take care of the plants and water them regularly.

hospitality professional Robert Dubourq and Suraj Ramdas, who was the youngest presenter (marketing and technological development).

Tony Pantophlet of SMMC spoke of health care institutions and patient/customer care, while Esther Halley gave a visual presentation on the importance of total personal and professional body care/hygiene.

According to the release, counsellor Jackie Arrendell explained the contents of each course-sector, as well as the promotion criteria. It also said the students had been briefed on study possibilities in the present education system and instructed how they could achieve their individual potential after the VSBO.

The release mentioned that the Directorate, guidance counsellors and mentors would evaluate COPSS and continue to pursue all avenues necessary to prepare the students.

Consconscious Lyrics Foundation to celebrate Black History

PHILIPSBURG—"From Emancipation to Reparations" is the theme for Black History Celebration 2004 on both sides of the island. Consconscious Lyrics Foundation (CLF) stated in a release Monday.

The focus is on reparations, Haiti's Bicentennial Independence celebration, the evils of slavery, the struggle for freedom and the victory of ongoing emancipation.

A month-long exhibition of portraits and abstract paintings of black people, serenading the mind, body and spirit will be displayed at the City Hall in Marigot. The opening ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, February 8, starting at 7:30pm.

CLF, which has been organizing the Black History celebration for the past 13 years, stated that daily readings were to be featured on Radio Soualiga 99.9 FM every day during February, after the midday news.

It said the historical struggle by people of African descent was to obtain true justice for what had been done to their ancestors for the last five centuries. "Slavery is today recognized by international human rights organizations such as the UN as a crime against humanity and as such our people must be prepared for this ongoing process of reparation," CLF stated.

The release said reparation was a long step towards healing a nation that had always been divided by race and classism.

"Sadly enough there are still those in this 21st century who oppose reparation, failing to recognize how much the lack of reparation has kept us from moving forward," it said. "This celebration is, amongst other things,

an expression of positive images of our people. As Frederick Douglass once said, 'Pictures come not with slavery and oppression and destitution, but with liberty, fair play, leisure, and refinement.'"



Ted and Daisy Johnson

Beverly Hyman starts 'Love' series tonight

PHILIPSBURG—Couples with exceptional relationships will "tell all" about how they stay together and keep love alive, live on Prime Time with Beverly Hyman all month long. The "Love is in the air" series starts today, Wednesday, February 4.

The show's host Beverly Hyman has dubbed February "the Month of Love."

Hyman issued a release stating that several couples, including Ted and Daisy Johnson, would talk about

their lives, children and marriages.

According to the release, "Prime Time with Beverly Hyman intends to showcase local events, personalities and matters of interest throughout the year."

Viewers are encouraged to check the local newspapers for details and show times.

Other guests slated to appear on the show during the series are Ray and Rosie Simmons, Ronald and Vickie Illes, and Wally and Maria Havertong.

Sundial reports successful career orientation programme

PHILIPSBURG—Sundial School has expressed sincere appreciation to the businesses and institutions that participated in a series of in-depth workshop sessions as part of the "Career Orientation Programme, Sundial School-VSBO 2 (COPSS)," which ran from January 21 to 23.

The programme was designed to help students make more informed course choices on promotion to VSBO 3.

According to a release from the school, "Presenters at the programme were a selection of professionals in various sectors that correlate with the courses offered in VSBO 3, such as Hospitality, Technical, Administration/Commerce, Basic Health Care and Cosmetology."

The speakers included Dr. Rachel Eersel and her assistant Fenna Arnell of Sector Health Care Affairs, Rolando Tobias of Windward Island Bank, veteran



With the signing of a new governing accord in Curaçao to formalize the joining of National Alliance and DP-Bonaire, the Central Government again established a majority of 13 seats in the 22-seat parliament. From left to right: PNP leader Ersilia de Lannoo, DP-Bonaire leader Jopi Abraham, "formateur" Ben Komproe (FOL) and PLKP leader Errol Cova. DP-Statia will now appoint a Deputy Plenipotentiary Minister in The Hague, a post held by DP-St. Maarten before it abandoned the federal coalition.



Work has started on the renovation of the public library in Curaçao. From this week the floor of the library upstairs will be tackled, while the main room on the ground floor is also undergoing renovations. The 350,000-guilder project will take about two months to complete.

Eleven KLM workers held on drug charges

WILLEMSTAD—Dutch detectives in cooperation with the Marechaussee detained a total of eleven KLM workers at Schiphol airport in Holland Monday and Tuesday, following an investigation into their involvement with drug trafficking.

In the operation 117 kilos of cocaine were also confiscated, at Schiphol and the airport of Aruba. A suspect was also arrested in Belgium with 104 kilos in his car.

The KLM workers separated luggage containing drugs from the other incoming baggage and then put the drugs in their own bags and sometimes boxes, to smuggle them out of the airport with their security clearance. They were informed beforehand in which bags the drugs would be, by giving them the numbers on the baggage tags.

The suspects are from Amsterdam (5), Lelystad, Rotterdam (2), Haarlem, Purmerend and Diemen. Luxury items, cars and 23,000 euros (50,000 guilders) in cash were also confiscated.

Each bag contained between 15 and 20 kilos of cocaine. It is believed that large quantities of drugs were brought in this way. It's not the first time baggage handlers have been arrested for being part of drug operations.



Lawyers with ministers of religion and ministers of Government outside St. Mary's Anglican Church.

Opening of criminal assizes and law year

ANGUILLA—A special church service to commemorate the opening of the legal year in Anguilla took place at the St. Mary's Anglican Church on Tuesday, February 3. It was followed by a guard of honour of the Royal Anguilla Police Force outside the Court House and the opening of the criminal assizes.

The church service led by Bishop Errol Brooks and Reverend Menes Hodge was attended by Governor and Mrs. Peter Johnstone, Chief Minister Osbourne Fleming, Minister of Finance Victor Banks, Kenneth Harrigan, Justice Janice Creque, Attorney General Ronald Scipio and members of the legal profession.

Hodge commended the law-

yers for starting the legal year with a church service. He took as his theme in the sermon, "God will judge you in the same way as you judge others," and urged the lawyers to let truth and honesty be their guide.

After the service the congregation proceeded to the Court House where the Royal Anguilla Police Force and the community band were on parade. The Judge took the salute and inspected the police, accompanied by Commissioner Keithly Benjamin.

In the High Court the Attorney General spoke of the need to address compensation for jurors, the official records of the court and the provision of legal aid. He said the number of cases to come before the court had decreased, but noted that there was an increase in the severity.

The major case in this assizes is the trial of Kallus

Rogers of Blowing Point, who is accused of the murder of Judith Wach of the USA in September 2002. The trial started on Tuesday with Chantelle Petty for the prosecution.

Other speakers were Alex Richardson, Courtney Abel and Patrick Patterson.

Justice Creque said she was pleased to see other branches of government present for the opening of the first assizes in the legal year. She agreed that compensation for jurors needed to be addressed, but indicated that the pool from which jurors were chosen should be larger. She expressed the hope that the bar and government could work together on a collaborative scheme for legal aid.

She ended by thanking the registrar and members of court staff for their hard work, and showing her appreciation to members of the bar.

St. Maarten prisoners get sentence reduction

PHILIPSBURG—Three St. Maarten convicts - Ismael Arndell, Alexis Arrindell and Ulrich Illis - were given ten per cent sentence reductions by the High Court in The Hague, which sent the case back to the Court of Appeals in Willemstad.

The three were originally sentenced to 10 years each in prison for the violent armed robbery of a jewelry store on the French side on April 9, 2000. On the same day they also stole a car at gunpoint and they were also charged with the illegal possession of firearms.

The Attorney General demanded 12 years each during the appeal, but the court went even further and gave them 14 years each. They then appealed to the High Court, which sent the case back, because such a big sentence increase must be backed by a strong motivation.

The trio's lawyer Gerrit Maduro also asked attention for the fact that they were being kept in the Curaçao prison while their families were in St. Maarten, which he called an additional punishment. Although all three had been sentenced to similar crimes in the past, the fact that they now showed remorse and were working in prison

also worked in their favour.

The High Court took into account that they had been awaiting their appeal in de-

tention for three years and nine months. A sentence reduction of 10 per cent was considered appropriate.



Board members of the Antillean police union NABP at Fort Amsterdam, following their meeting with Justice Minister Ben Komproe. The latter promised to introduce a federal decree shortly to solve the problems of the past years with payment for extra work during Curaçao's Carnival events.

Two new subjects now being offered

ANGUILLA—Two new subjects are being included in those offered for the adult and continuing classes.

Coordinator Charles Connor said the new courses Car Maintenance and Electrical Installation classes had already begun. He is very pleased with the tutors of all the courses and hopes that more persons will take advantage of the opportunities offered.

Other skills courses offered are computer, sewing, cake making and decoration, embroidery and "hardanger," and carpentry. These are in addition to the traditional courses in English and Mathematics.

Upon successful completion of the courses persons are awarded certificates endorsed by the Ministry of Education Department.

Nevisians helping to reduce level of poverty

NEVIS—Health Educator in the Nevis Island Administration Shirley Wilkes said Nevisians were a part of the national committee mandated to reduce the level of poverty that presently exists in the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

Speaking to the Government Information Service (GIS) on Monday, Wilkes said a recent assessment called the Poverty Assessment of the Socio-Economic conditions of St. Kitts and Nevis had revealed that 30 per cent of persons were living in the poverty range.

She said a steering committee had been formed to look at a number of strategies that could be used in



Shirley Wilkes

communities to help alleviate impoverished conditions. She also observed that she, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Physical Planning Elvin Bailey and Olvis Dyer had been selected to

serve on that committee.

According to Wilkes, the three-day initiation workshop, which took place in St. Kitts last week, was to identify the role of the committee and ways in which it could assist in the fight against poverty.

"Our role is to form a sub-committee in Nevis, taking into consideration that poverty cuts across all sectors," she said. "Our subcommittee is to identify key persons in the community whom we could train as community leaders or, if they already exist as community leaders, so that they could help their community to alleviate poverty."

In pointing out that there were three basic areas of concentration, Wilkes noted that it would take at least 11 months to train persons and to formulate a plan of action that could be implemented within the Federation.

She said the three basic areas to be concentrated on are longevity in terms of living a healthy life, upgrading the standard of living and the empowerment of individuals based on training persons to budget their finances and empower themselves to get better-paying jobs.

The Ministry of Social Development, Community and Gender Affairs in St. Kitts was given the task of spearheading the entire training in collaboration with UNECLAC, which will provide funding as well as technical assistance.



Shareholders of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla National Bank at 33rd annual general meeting at Ocean Terrace Inn. Yes, the tiny tot in the second row is also a shareholder.

National Bank shareholders reap EC \$11M in dividends

ST. KITTS—Shareholders of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla National Bank will share nearly EC \$11 million in dividends.

Shareholders at the bank's 33rd annual general meeting at Ocean Terrace Inn last Thursday accepted a recommendation from the Board of Directors to pay a dividend of 13.5 per cent for the financial year ended June 30, 2003.

The dividend totalled EC \$10.9 million compared to EC \$8.4 million paid in 2002. National Bank made a profit of EC \$17.6 million in 2003.

Shareholders' equity increased from EC \$56.4 mil-

lion in 1999 to EC \$133.8 million in 2003, a whopping 137.3 per cent increase over that period. It stood at EC \$127.5 million on June 30, 2002.

Shareholders at Thursday's meeting congratulated the bank's Board of Directors and the management team on the successful operations in 2003 and applauded the introduction of on-line banking. National Bank customers can conduct banking transactions, including accessing account information, sending wire transfers and standing orders.

National Bank's headquarters are located on the cor-

ner of West Independence Square and Central Streets. St. Kitts has branches at Sandy Point, Saddle, Pelican Mall and Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport, and there is a branch in Nevis.

National Bank also has Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) at Old Road, St. Paul's, Cayon, Lodge, St. Peter's, C.A. Paul/Southwell Industrial Park, Vance Amory International Airport, Nevis Branch, Sandy Point Branch, Saddle Branch and two each at Pelican Mall and the Basseterre Branch.

Aruba's exports drop drastically

ARUBA—Aruba's exports dropped by 33.9 per cent in the course of 2003 compared to the year before.

This dramatic result was caused especially by the slump of the export of agricultural produce, which decreased from 183.7 to 118.4 million florins. Nevertheless, four per cent more was been exported in December 2003

compared to same month the year before.

The Central Bureau of Statistics has observed that exports were 86.5 per cent in agriculture produce with a value of 17.1 million florins. Imports, on the other hand, increased by 10 per cent or 1,518.5 million florins, primarily in the sectors "metal, machines, and tools."

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Financial services commission launched

ANGUILLA—The Financial Services Commission was officially launched at a ceremony on Monday, February 2. This means that the Financial Services in Anguilla are now an operationally independent body, free of government control and with its own funding.

The board to manage the Commission announced by Governor Peter Johnstone consists of Chairman Dennis Cross, Vice Chairman Ralph Hodge, Alex Richardson and Carl Harrigan. The commission staff comprises Director John Lawrence, Carlyle Rogers and Maria Smith, with an additional member to be appointed.

"I look forward to launching of the Board's plan for the coming year. I am confident that they will play a major role in ensuring that the best interests of investors and users of Anguilla's products and services will be protected and that the jurisdiction itself is guarded from abuse by fraudsters, money launderers and those assisting the financing of terrorism," Johnstone said.

He said he expected they would be proactive in ensuring high levels of compliance with current and future legislation and regulations.

Minister of Finance Victor Banks described the day as an historic one in the



Board and staff of the Financial Services Commission. Back row (from left to right): Carl Harrigan, Ralph Hodge and Alex Richardson form the Board. Front row: John Lawrence, Maria Smith and Carlyle Rogers.

development of Anguilla's Financial Centre. "The launching of the Financial Services Commission in effect demonstrates Anguilla's recognition of the importance of sound regulation of the development and promotion of the financial services sector," he said.

Lawrence thanked Johnstone, Banks and Permanent Secretaries for all their assistance in setting up the commission. He outlined the roles and functions of the Commission and its administrative obligations and powers. He gave an account of the legislative programme for the coming year, which will include legislation for insurance, mutual fund and protected cell legislation, as

well as amendments to existing legislation.

"Our job is to move forward by setting the standards, ensuring that standards are adhered to, that best advice is available and is given, and that Anguilla establishes a reputation for service, for which the ACORN system has already set the tone," he said.

He said integrity, fairness and high ethical standards should be expected from the Commission. At the same time the Commission will expect high standards of service and conduct from practitioners and licensees, as well as compliance with legislation and regulations, and early consultation with the Commission in respect to any problems.

President of the Anguilla Financial Services Association (AFSA) Pamela Webster said the primary objective of the Association was to make the Financial Services Industry the most important industry for the island. She expressed the hope that AFSA would play a key role in the future of the industry and suggested that through partnership there would be no limit to the business that could be achieved.



The world's largest cruise ship in service, the Queen Mary II, arrived in St. Kitts on its inaugural trip yesterday, much to the delight of residents, many of whom took time out from early in the morning to catch a glimpse of the ship as it entered the harbour. Some spectators are seen here making full use of one of the vantage points.

Register of voters posted

ST. KITTS—The register of voters, which includes the names of persons who were registered to vote as of December 31, 2003, has been posted.

According to the Electoral Office, copies of the list were posted at two conspicuous places in each polling division in the 11 constituencies, on Saturday, January 31, in accordance with the provisions of the National Assembly Elections Act.

Registered voters are being requested to check the

register of voters to ensure that their names are listed on the register.

A person who claims to be entitled to be registered as a voter and whose name, address and/or occupation have changed or are listed incorrectly, may claim to be registered correctly by completing a Notice of Claim and submitting it to the registration officer at the Electoral Office by Tuesday, February 10.

The Electoral Office said a person whose name appears

on the register of voters for an electoral district may object to the registration of any person whose name is included in the said register.

Persons who wish to make objections to names appearing on the register should complete a Notice of Objection and submit same to the registration officer no later than Tuesday, February 10.

Claim and objection forms can be obtained at the Electoral Offices in Basseterre and Charlestown.

Wave Knight expected to be in Anguilla today

ANGUILLA—The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Wave Knight under the command of Captain Alan Roach will be in Anguilla from Wednesday to Friday, February 4-6.

Wave Knight is the first of a new class of British Fast Fleet replenishment tankers and came into service in March 2003. The ship is engaged in its first foreign deployment.

The Captain will make courtesy calls on Governor Peter Johnstone, Chief Minister Osbourne Fleming and Commissioner of Police Keith Benjamin this morning. He will host an informal lunch on board on Thursday for invited guests.

Members of the crew are expected to hold a number of training activities at sea with crews of the ferry boats.

Roach has served in all classes of RFA during his career. His first command

in July 1987 was RFA Black Rover. His appointment to RFA Wave Knight in August 2000 began a long association with the ship, seeing her through to building completion, sea trials and bringing her into service early last year.

US official's sentence for sale of US visas reduced

GEORGETOWN — A former State Department official caught selling hundreds of visas out of the U.S. Embassy in Guyana was sentenced on Friday to six and a half years in federal prison.

Thomas P. Carroll, 36, showed no emotion as U.S. District Judge Blanche M.

Manning, acting on orders from a federal appeals court, chopped almost 15 years off of his earlier sentence. "There is no doubt that his conduct was very serious," Manning said. But she bowed to the appeals court, which said the 21-year sentence she imposed on him in June 2002 was too tough.

The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said in October 21 years was "draconian" and the former Foreign Service officer should have gotten no more than seven years and three months. Carroll has been behind bars for almost four years, and that time will count against his new sentence of 78 months in prison.

Carroll, a vice counsel at the embassy when arrested in March 2000, sold up to 800 visas for entry into the United States for bribes of between US\$10,000 and US\$15,000 each. He pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States, issuing false visa documents and bribing an official.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Diplomatic Security Service, a law enforcement arm of the State Department. Defence attorney Steven Shabat urged Manning to sentence Carroll to the minimum the court of appeals said would be appropriate, 70 months. He said Carroll feels remorse for his crimes.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Carolyn F. McNiven reminded Manning that Carroll had not only sold visas but enlisted a paramilitary group to silence possible witnesses through terror. "So far the remorse I have seen is Mr. Carroll's remorse for himself," McNiven said. "He is profoundly sad that he got caught. He is profoundly sad that he is in jail." She urged Manning to give Carroll the maximum. Carroll still owes the government US\$2.5 million the court ordered forfeited in addition to a load of gold bars that agents seized when they arrested him.

Death of murder accused in hospital raises questions

GEORGETOWN — Guyana—Murder accused Mark Thomas was an emotional wreck suffering from hypertension, say hospital sources.

He died on Sunday night two weeks after being charged with the January 5 murder of cattle farmer Shaheek Bacchus. One hospital source told Stabroek News that his condition was discovered when Thomas was admitted to the Georgetown Public Hospital on January 16 after collapsing upon learning of the



Mark Thomas

charge. Stabroek News had been unable to determine exactly what warranted him

remaining in hospital but his sudden demise has raised questions.

The man, who operated the Aubrey's Wine Bar at George and Norton streets, was charged along with Ashton King and Shawn Hinds with murdering Bacchus whose brother George has since stated that a death squad (allegedly linked to Home Affairs minister Ronald Gajraj) existed and was responsible for the killing of several criminals and other persons.

One patient in the same ward recalled that on Sunday, Thomas had a little to eat late in the afternoon and had appeared fine. Shortly after, he suffered convulsions and begged for a drink of water. He crashed to the ground and started frothing at the mouth. Minutes later he was dead.

Monday, his employer Aubert Van Sertima, who lives in Saudi Arabia, said the death looked suspicious and should be investigated thoroughly. He said he would allow the police to perform the post mortem but if not satisfied he would have an independent pathologist conduct a second autopsy.

He wondered why as soon as the man died the police gathered and picked up their handcuffs and left the body unattended. He pointed out that Thomas was under their control and his sudden death, taking into consideration the allegations levelled against him, should have been a cause of great concern.

He said that when he visited the hospital Thomas' body, which had a screen around it, was unattended and everyone went to have a look. He said the least the police could have done was to collect any of Thomas' possessions so as to investigate what could have caused his death.

He feels that Thomas might have died from something he had drunk or eaten. Van Sertima said he occasionally sent food for Thomas but on Sunday he did not send any and could not say who took food for him. (Stabroek News)

Chief Justice, top cop discuss placing restrictions on gangsters



Chief Justice Lensley Wolfe

KINGSTON, Jamaica—Police Commissioner Francis Forbes Monday met with Chief Justice Lensley Wolfe and discussed the possibility of restricting the movement of reputed gang members who have been granted bail by the court.

Forbes also discussed, with the chief justice, how the police presented their cases in court to determine if they have been advancing sufficient and tangible grounds to the court when they are rejecting bail for gangsters.

"We had a very useful discussion, (but) it was not for the chief justice to accept or reject (the proposal) because there is a foundation in law for him to proceed," Forbes told reporters after the meeting at the chambers of the chief justice at the Supreme Court in downtown Kingston.

He however declined to say whether the chief justice was in support of his proposal to monitor and restrict the movement of gang members out on bail. He nevertheless hinted that such provisions for a curfew order was already in the new Bail Act of 2000, and it was now up to the courts to follow through when offering bail to gang members.

Following discussions with Justice Wolfe, the commissioner called an emergency meeting with senior criminal investigators and other top officers to discuss the outcome of the meeting.

"I will meet with some of my senior detectives to give some guidance as to how best to pursue investigations so that we can achieve our objectives," Forbes told the Observer.

The police chief, concerned about the recent upsurge of gang violence in Spanish Town, announced last Friday that he would be seeking a curfew order from the court to restrict the movement of gang members while they were out on bail.

The order, he said, would restrict the gangsters to the confines of their homes. (Jamaica Observer)



Prime Minister Keith Mitchell and Prime Minister Tony Blair at Number 10 Downing Street, during a meeting on Monday, February 2, 2004.

Blair, Mitchell meet at 10 Dowding Street

LONDON—Prime Minister Keith Mitchell met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair at Number 10 Downing Street on Monday afternoon.

Prime Minister Blair extended a warm welcome to Prime Minister Mitchell and wished him well in his third consecutive term in Office.

Discussions focussed on Grenada's economy and Government's plans for the future, as well as continued co-operation with the Brit-

ish Government. Areas of cooperation addressed by the two Prime Ministers included support for the Royal Grenada Police Force and the fight against the illegal drug trade, as well as HIV/AIDS and other social issues.

Later, the Prime Minister met with the Rt. Hon. George Foulkes, MP, President of the Caribbean British Business Council (CBBC), to discuss the creation of a Friends of

Grenada group consisting of parliamentarians and investors.

Foulkes hosted a dinner in the Prime Minister's honour, which was attended by CBBC Director Sue Monteath, business members of the CBBC, as well as Director of the Caribbean Council David Jessop.

The prime minister and the guests discussed development plans of the Government of Grenada. The idea of the Friends of Grenada group was elaborated on and it was agreed that an investment team would visit Grenada soon to look at potential opportunities in the agro-processing, tourism and Information Communication Technology sectors.

how will these measures force them to pay up their deductions? Shaw told the Observer. "It is something we will have to look into when the Bill comes to the House, because there is no sanction against these (government) departments except when they appear before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC)."

Shaw is chairman of the PAC, the parliamentary body that reviews the financial behaviour of government ministries and agencies, mostly based on the reports of the Auditor General.

Neither the NHT's chairman, Kingsley Thomas nor its managing director was immediately available for comment, but analysts last night estimated that the government owes the NHT about \$10 billion in employer contributions, against the estimated \$1.5 billion that is owed by private firms in both employee and employer contributions. (Jamaica Observer)

Integrity body looking into Manning's jet rides

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad—The Integrity Commission is currently "seeking information" about the jet rides of Prime Minister Patrick Manning which were paid for by energy giants British Gas and Repsol.

This was revealed in a letter which the Integrity Commission has written to Opposition MP Dr Roodal Moonilal who initially called on the commission to look into the trips which Manning has admitted to accepting.

In its reply to Moonilal's letter of January 4, the commission in its letter dated January 30, noted: "While the provision of ad hoc trips for the Prime Minister by named energy corporations has been widely publicised in the media, the Integrity Commission, as a prelude to any investigation, is seeking information from the appropriate sources regarding the circumstances under which these trips were made available."

Manning had stated at a post-Cabinet news conference early last month, that after attending the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Nigeria he went to Europe where he had engaged in "discussions" and not "negotiations" with the energy companies.

He also admitted that both British Gas and Repsol hired private airplanes to jet him between Spain and Britain.

Manning has been

criticised by the Opposition United National Congress (UNC) for his discussions with the multinationals in the absence of Energy Minister Eric Williams.

The Prime Minister has revealed that Prof Ken Julien, Andrew Jupiter, the Permanent Secretary in the Energy Ministry, and a diplomat from the country's embassy in Brussels accompanied him to Spain and were part of the discussions in Britain.

Manning said the decision to accept offers from both British Gas and Repsol to pay for his trips was not unacceptable but he only accepted because he was asked to meet with the new board of BG and to do so would have resulted in him missing

his flight to Spain. Similarly, he said, a meeting with the King of Spain, Juan Carlos, would have led to him missing the return flight to London.

Repsol's general manager, Pedro Váton, had told the Express that his company had not provided a private jet for Manning and that he had flown between Madrid and London on a commercial flight.

But, Manning later dismissed this saying that he had indeed travelled from Spain to England on a private jet sponsored by Repsol.

In his letter, Moonilal had asked the commission to enquire whether Manning had violated any laws when he accepted the trips. (Trinidad Express)

Govt to get tough with delinquent employers

KINGSTON, Jamaica—The government Monday signalled its intention to get tough with private sector employers who deduct National Housing Trust contributions from employees' pay but fail to hand the money over to the NHT.

At the weekly meeting of the Cabinet, ministers agreed to amend the NHT Act to give the finance minister the power to impose, by order, but subject to affirmative resolution in Parliament, new penalties on delinquents.

The information minister, Burchell Whiteman, told reporters that the amendment to the legislation would be tabled in the House shortly.

But last night the Opposition's shadow finance minister, Audley Shaw, questioned the moral authority of the government to put the squeeze on private sector firms which fail to remit NHT deductions when the government is the greatest offender. "They are one of the main offenders and the question is

US Senate leader confirms ricin found in his office

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senate Majority leader Bill Frist confirmed on Tuesday that the deadly poison ricin had been found in the mailroom of his Senate office, but said people exposed to it so far had shown no signs of ill health.

Capitol Police Chief Terrance Gainer said the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force launched a criminal investigation after the powder was found on Monday in Frist's office in the Dirksen Senate Building, stirring memories of a 2001 anthrax attack on the Capitol.

Gainer, in a news conference with Frist, said the powder was near an area where letters had been opened but it was unclear if the ricin had been in an envelope or a package, or whether it came through the mail at all.

Separately, law enforcement sources said on Tuesday a letter containing ricin and addressed to the White House had been intercepted last November but had not been considered a public health risk because of its low potency. That incident was being investigated by the FBI as part of a probe begun a month earlier with the discovery of an envelope containing ricin at a South Carolina postal fa-



U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R, TN), holds a news conference to discuss the intentional exposing of Capitol Hill employees to a possible toxin found yesterday in the Dirksen Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill, with U.S. Capitol attending physician Dr. John Eisdold (L), on Tuesday.

cility.

Gainer said investigators were examining the mail stream to the Capitol and the office and the material in it had been isolated. No trace of the toxin had been found in ventilation systems so far, he said.

The office of Frist, a Ten-

nessee Republican, said two dozen Senate staffers had been held for about eight hours on Monday night and showered in a special decontamination tent. About a dozen Capitol police were also decontaminated.

Three Senate office buildings were closed on Tuesday,

forcing postponement of a number of appearances by top Bush administration officials at hearings. They were to remain closed on Wednesday, and all Capitol tours were canceled. Frist said he hoped the offices would be opened during the next week.

Lawmakers continued busi-

ness on the Senate floor in the Capitol building, and the House of Representatives remained open.

In Connecticut, an envelope containing a suspicious powder was found in a post office overnight and officials said it was addressed to the Republican National Committee. The powder was being tested to see if it was ricin.

Frist, a physician, said it was encouraging that no one had shown signs of illness nearly 24 hours after possible exposure. "I'm happy to report everybody is doing fine," he said. "Usually injuries occur in the first four to eight hours."

Dr. John Eisdold, the Capitol's physician, urged people with respiratory symptoms to see their doctor. "Right now we have a window that we're looking at, probably for the next 48 to 72 hours, to see if anybody develops progressive symptoms. And right now I think we're confident that we can catch those people and treat them safely," he said.

Frist said more test results were needed to show how active the ricin was and whether it could be harmful if airborne.

A government official said the incident bore the hallmarks of a domestic criminal action—not a terror attack.

"This does not bear the marks of international terrorism," the official said.

Secret Service spokeswoman Ann Roman declined to give details of the ricin letter addressed to the White House "because it's part of an ongoing investigation."

Authorities said it was too early to know if any or all of the ricin incidents were related. There was no explanation of why the White House letter had not been previously disclosed.

Department of Homeland Security officials said in October there was no sign that terrorism was involved in the South Carolina letter.

Amid an outbreak of mail-borne anthrax contamination in October 2001 which also struck the U.S. Capitol, a small amount of spores of the bacteria were found in a remote White House mail facility. Ricin is a potentially fatal toxin with no antidote but experts say it is hard to distribute, making the likelihood that anyone has been poisoned very small.

It is derived from castor beans and can kill within 36 to 72 hours of exposure to significant amounts, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Kerry takes huge stride towards nomination, Edwards stays alive

WASHINGTON—Democratic front-runner John Kerry took a huge stride toward the presidential nomination on Tuesday with wins in at least five states, but John Edwards scored a victory in South Carolina to keep the race alive.

Kerry, riding a huge wave of momentum since back-to-back wins in the first two contests last month, won in Missouri, Arizona, Delaware, North Dakota and New Mexico as seven states voted on Tuesday on the biggest day so far in the race to find a challenger to President George W. Bush.

Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman, the Democratic nominee for vice president in

2000, was shut out on Tuesday and quit the race in what he called a "difficult but realistic decision."

In Oklahoma, Edwards, a North Carolina senator, and retired Gen. Wesley Clark were locked in a tight battle for a win that could keep Clark's candidacy viable or promote Edwards to the role of prime challenger to Kerry.

Kerry, the Massachusetts senator who faced questions about whether he could compete nationwide, said he had showed broad appeal with strong showings in all seven states. "Now we will carry this campaign and the cause of a stronger, fairer, more prosperous America to every part of America," Kerry said in

remarks prepared for delivery at his victory rally in Seattle, Washington.

"We will take nothing for granted, we will compete everywhere, and in November, with your help, we will defeat George W. Bush," he said. The victory by Edwards in South Carolina, which he labeled a must-win state, positioned him to become Kerry's prime challenger and boosted his argument he would provide the strongest opponent to Bush in rural areas and in the South.

"Tonight we said that the politics of lifting people up beats the politics of tearing people down," Edwards, who emphasized a positive message focused on the economy, told roaring supporters in downtown Columbia, South Carolina.

"Today we said clearly to the American people that in our country, in our America, everything is possible," Edwards said.

A total of 269 delegates to Kerry's nominating convention were at stake in those seven. According to early delegate projections by MSNBC, Kerry picked up at least 68 delegates on Tuesday for a total of 181 toward the 2,162 needed to win the nomination. Edwards picked up 49 for a total of 83, putting him in third place behind Dean with 114.

Lieberman had been hoping for a win in Delaware, but dropped out after meeting with staff members and conferring with his family. "I have



U.S. Democratic presidential candidate and Senator John Kerry acknowledges cheers from a crowd at a rally in Spokane, Washington, on Tuesday.

decided tonight to end my quest for the presidency of the United States of America," Lieberman said at a rally near his campaign headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

Tuesday's votes offered the first nationwide test for the candidates, who spent almost all of January battling in Iowa and New Hampshire, largely white and rural states that hosted the first two nominating tests. South Carolina was the first contest in the South and the first in a state with a large black population, while Arizona and New Mexico held the first contests in states with large Hispanic populations.

The race moves next to Michigan and Washington on Saturday, Maine on Sunday, and Virginia and Tennessee next Tuesday.

Dean, struggling to halt his downward slide after dismal finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire, continued his string of poor showings on

Tuesday. His fight for second place in New Mexico was the only finish above the middle of the pack.

Dean, who spent election night in Washington, put a brave face on the results and looked ahead to Michigan, Washington and to a Feb. 17 showdown in Wisconsin. He promised to push ahead into March.

"We are going to have a tough night tonight," Dean told supporters in Tacoma, Washington, but he vowed to keep "going and going and going."

"We're going to pick up more delegates tonight and this is all about who gets the most delegates in Boston in July and it's going to be us," Dean said.

While Tuesday offers a rich harvest of delegates to the

nominating convention, only about 10 percent of the total delegates will have been chosen by the end of the night.

Dean, Edwards and Clark hope to extend the race to March 2, when huge, delegate-rich states like New York and California vote.

Kerry, whose rise has been fueled by a belief among Democratic voters that he offers the best chance to beat Bush in November, pointed to public opinion polls that showed him leading Bush in a one-on-one matchup.

Network exit polls showed that in South Carolina, Edwards scored particularly well with independents, who were able to participate in the Democratic contest. But Kerry was the overwhelming choice of those who voted based on electability, the exit polls showed.

US, Libya to hold talks on improving relations

WASHINGTON—U.S. and Libyan officials will meet in London on Friday for talks expected to include the possibility of easing U.S. economic sanctions and resuming an American diplomatic presence in Tripoli, U.S. officials said.

The meetings, which will include British officials, reflect Washington's desire to make some gestures to reward Libya for its Dec. 19 decision to give up its weapons of mass destruction program and its follow-through since then, officials said.

The officials stressed that it could be some time before the vast array of U.S. economic sanctions are removed or before the United States might open an embassy in Tripoli. But they said they wanted to open a "political dialogue" now.

Tripoli's surprise decision to abandon its weapons of mass destruction programs and its admission of responsibility for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing in August have paved the way for an improvement in U.S.-Libyan relations after years of enmity.

With Libya's cooperation, U.S. weapons experts last month combed the country for such arms and last week the United States said it had taken possession of 55,000 pounds (25,000 kg) of equipment and documents from Libya's nuclear program.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Assistant Secretary of State William Burns would represent the United States at the London talks but gave no details on what steps Washington might take on sanctions or diplomatic ties.

"This is the result of positive

steps that Libya has been taking to eliminate all elements of its weapons of mass destruction programs and controlled classes of missiles," Boucher said. He also said he expected a new U.S. team of weapons experts to visit Libya soon to continue dismantling its arms programs.

"Now that we've seen a couple weeks of action on the removal and verification, it's appropriate to have a political dialogue on what lies ahead," Boucher added. "The situation with Libya has fundamentally changed."

White House defends Bush's guard service during war

WASHINGTON—The White House swung into campaign mode on Tuesday to defend President George W. Bush's record in the Texas Air National Guard far from the battlefields of Vietnam after Democrats accused him of going "AWOL."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan denied Democratic charges that Bush shirked his military duties in the early 1970s unlike Democratic presidential front-runner John Kerry, a decorated Vietnam veteran. McClellan called the accusations "shameful" and the "worst of election-year politics." Bush "fulfilled his duties" in the National Guard and was honorably discharged. "The president was proud of his service," McClellan added.

The counter-attack came

as voters voted in seven states on the biggest day yet of a Democratic presidential race so far dominated by Kerry.

Analysts said the unusually blunt response underscored White House concerns that military service could become a campaign issue. Bush stayed out of combat in Vietnam while serving as a pilot in the Air National Guard.

Democrats have long challenged Bush's record of attendance in the guard in 1972 when he transferred temporarily to an Alabama unit to work on a political campaign. According to a copy of the National Guard document granting him an "honorable" discharge on Oct. 1, 1973, Bush completed five years and four months of service—less than the obligatory six years—before entering Harvard Business

School.

On Sunday, Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McLaughlin threw the issue to center stage, telling ABC's "This Week" television program that he welcomed a debate on military service if Kerry won the party's presidential nomination.

"I look forward to that debate when John Kerry, a war hero with a chest full of medals, is standing next to George Bush, a man who was AWOL in the Alabama National Guard," McLaughlin said. "George Bush never served in our military in our country. He didn't show up when he should have showed up."

The accusation that Bush was AWOL, or "absent without leave," stems from charges that he missed required drills in Alabama.



Democratic Unionist Party leader Ian Paisley addresses the media after the first meeting of the review of the Northern Ireland Good Friday peace agreement at Stormont Parliament Buildings, Belfast, on Tuesday.

Foes start fresh bid to revive Northern Irish power-sharing

BELFAST—Northern Ireland's political foes sat down together on Tuesday, but yielded little at the start of a review of the Good Friday peace agreement that London and Dublin hope will revive a mothballed power-sharing government.

Rival Protestant and Catholic parties and the British and Irish governments are looking at ways to modify the landmark 1998 peace deal, which largely ended three decades of violence that claimed more than 3,600 lives, but has since stalled. The peace deal's flagship institution, a power-sharing assembly, has been suspended for more than a year.

"I know there's a challenge, but every time we try to come to a solution to this problem

the sceptics raise their heads and say this agreement is about to collapse. It won't collapse," Irish Foreign Minister Brian Cowen told a news conference.

Analysts paint a gloomy picture of the chances of reaching agreement at the talks, which are expected to last around three months, but the two governments insist progress is possible.

"All of us know here in Northern Ireland the unexpected can happen," said Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary Paul Murphy. "Agreement can occur so long as there is determination on the part of individual parties and their leaders and the governments to move forward."

Hardline preacher Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which overtook more moderate rivals in an election last November to become the largest Protestant group, has always opposed the Good Friday agreement and wants major changes. "Today was a farce of everybody making their statements—it was only to please the governments to say they got everybody in one room," the 77-year-old Paisley told reporters.

The DUP's Catholic opponents say they will not renegotiate the key planks of the Good Friday Agreement. "Anyone who thinks that any democrat will accept less than what the people in both states of this island voted for is just a bit deluded," said Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Féin, the largest Catholic party.

The DUP says it will not join government, or face-to-face talks, with Sinn Féin as it is the ally of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Paisley refers to Sinn Féin leaders as "terrorists".

The IRA declared a ceasefire in its campaign against British rule in 1997, but unionists, committed to political ties to Britain, are unhappy the guerrillas retain weapons stockpiles. IRAsays it has partially disarmed and says London has not fulfilled pledges to decrease its army presence in the province.

"Plainly the underlying problem in the political process is the same as ever; the failure of paramilitaries, most notably the IRA, to engage in acts of (dis)armament," said David Trimble, head of the moderate Protestant Ulster Unionist Party.

Frustrated EU drawing up new policy on Russia

BRUSSELS—The European Union is preparing a major review of relations with Russia following a disastrous EU-Russia summit last November, an EU official said on Tuesday.

A policy paper drafted for External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten will be completed by February 10 and foreign ministers of the 25 current and future EU member states will discuss it on February 23.

The study will argue relations between the union and Russia—which will border five EU states when the bloc adds 10 new members on May 1—are drifting along with few results and are too important for this to continue. "Russia and the EU are important partners, yet we don't seem to be making enough progress as fast as we want, and the Russians feel the same. We're frustrated and so are they," the official told Reuters.

The review was prompted partly by an outburst by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi hosting a November EU-Russia summit in Rome, when he endorsed Kremlin policies, prompting the EU executive and most member states to dissociate themselves. But EU officials are determined not to repeat a situation in which its institutions are publicly at odds on a key issue.

"Clearly the way Berlusconi handled the summit was the last straw that showed the need for a more coherent EU approach," said the official,

who asked not to be identified.

At a joint news conference with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Berlusconi enthusiastically supported Moscow's military policy in the breakaway region of Chechnya.

He also backed Putin's handling of the arrest of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Russia's richest man and former head of oil giant YUKOS. Brussels had criticised Russia in both cases.

Relations with Russia are set to move up the agenda after EU enlargement on May 1. Eight of the new members were once in the former Eastern Bloc and some have a deep antipathy to Moscow. Three—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—were Soviet republics, and Russia has been arguing with Estonia and Latvia over the rights of ethnic Russians still living there.

Moscow also has written to Brussels expressing concern about the economic impact of enlargement, particularly on its potential loss of trade with the new member states. Russia and the EU are also at odds on conditions for Russian entry into the World Trade Organisation, and over Moscow's failure to ratify the Kyoto Treaty on climate change.

EU officials have said the three issues—enlargement, WTO membership and Kyoto—could be addressed together in a "grand bargain" before the May 1 enlargement deadline.



Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair (white shirt) answers questions from the parliamentary Liaison Committee in London, on Tuesday.

British PM calls Iraq WMD inquiry, opponents cry foul

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair bowed to pressure on Tuesday for an inquiry into the quality of British intelligence on banned Iraqi weapons, but his opponents said its terms were so narrow it would let the government off the hook.

Britain's third party, The Liberal Democrats, said they would take no part in the investigation after Blair refused to allow it to probe the politics behind the decision to wage war. Instead, it will focus exclusively on problems with the information gleaned by spies.

"I think it is right that we have a look at the intelligence

that we received and whether it was accurate or not," Blair told a parliamentary committee. "We do not in my view need an inquiry into the political decision to go to war."

Until now, Blair has firmly resisted calls for an inquiry. But pressure has increased relentlessly as nearly 10 months after Saddam Hussein was toppled, no biological or chemical weapons—the reasons Blair gave for war—have been found. Prior to the war, he said Iraq posed a "serious and current" threat and that it had continued to produce banned weapons.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw told parliament the inquiry, headed by former chief civil servant Lord Butler, would report by July, well before next year's expected election. However, pollsters said it was unlikely the inquiry would have a major impact on Blair's election prospects.

"The British public is suffering from Iraq fatigue. It is not affecting people's daily lives," Peter Kellner from pollster YouGov told Reuters. "This is an issue of concern to politicians, lobbyists and the media—the chattering classes. I am not sure it will have a vast impact on the next election."

The inquiry will hear from

witnesses in private and investigate the accuracy of intelligence on Iraq's weapons and examine any discrepancies between it and what has been discovered since the end of the conflict.

The government line, until now, that evidence of banned weapons could yet be found had proved increasingly hard to sustain since chief U.S. weapons hunter David Kay quit his post, saying he believed Iraq had no stockpiles of illicit weapons. President George W. Bush's decision on Monday to set up an independent commission on U.S. intelligence turned up the heat on Britain to do the same.

Conservative foreign affairs spokesman Michael Ancram said Blair had performed a "spectacular U-turn".

Juppe stays in politics, fights conviction

PARIS—Former French Prime Minister Alain Juppe announced on Tuesday he would remain in politics to fight a conviction for political corruption, saying he had done nothing worse than many other politicians.

Juppe said in a live television broadcast that he was appealing against the verdict. This allows him to remain in politics temporarily and salvaged President Jacques Chirac's hopes that his close ally could eventually succeed him.

"I am appealing (against the verdict) and since the appeal has the effect of suspending it, I continue to carry out my duties," Juppe, 58, told TF1 television in an interview during prime-time viewing.

The decision ended days of suspense after Juppe was found guilty last Friday of using Paris city hall funds to pay party allies holding fake jobs in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when he was in charge of finances there and Chirac was Paris mayor.

Juppe received an 18-month suspended sentence and was barred from elected office for 10 years. But he can stay on as a member of parliament, mayor of the southwestern city of Bordeaux and head of the centre-right UMP party while his appeal is examined.

"I made mistakes, it's clear.

Blast in south Russia kills one, injures 10

VLADIKAVKAZ, Russia—A woman was killed and 10 servicemen were injured when a car blew up on Tuesday in the commercial centre of a southern Russian town near rebel Chechnya, officials said.

Russian news agencies reported a cadet had later died in hospital, but this could not be confirmed.

Police in Vladikavkaz, capital of North Ossetia region, told Reuters the car exploded as a truck carrying police cadets passed by and security officials said it was "a terrorist act".

"Ten people are injured, the driver of the truck and one of the cadets are in a very serious condition. One woman who was walking past was killed," said a source in the group investigating the

blast. "This is definitely a terrorist act, there were at least five kilos of explosive in the car, and probably more."

Officers from the FSB—Russia's main KGB successor group—and Interior Ministry investigators were investigating the cause of the blast. Chechen separatist rebels have frequently attacked military and civilian targets in and around their homeland where they have been battling Russian forces for a decade to win independence.

"Fragments of an explosive device have been found at the scene of the blast. Our experts are now working there and one of the main scenarios is that this was a terrorist act," a FSB spokesman said.

But an Interior Ministry spokesman, quoted by Inter-Tass news agency, said: "According to our preliminary information, a gas canister exploded in the car but we are also considering other versions."

Other agencies quoted the ministry as saying the blast could have been the work of battling criminal groups.

European Union:

World Court ruling on Israel security fence inappropriate

BRUSSELS—The European Union does not think the World Court should rule on whether Israel's building of a barrier in the West Bank is legal as it would undermine peace efforts in the Middle East, a diplomat said on Tuesday.

Israel says it is building the huge barrier to stop suicide bombers reaching its cities, but Palestinians call it a land grab. The United Nations has asked the International Court of Justice in the Hague to rule

on its legality.

A European diplomat said the EU—currently under the presidency of Ireland—had sent a letter to the court saying an opinion from the tribunal would be “inappropriate”. Israel has said some 30 countries have joined it in objecting to the World Court's right to rule on the legality of the barrier.

“The EU believes that the proposed request for an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice will not help the efforts of the two parties to re-launch a political dialogue,” an attachment to the letter said.

The contents of the letter itself have not been made public, but the attachment was originally issued as an EU statement at the United Nations in December 2003.

The court said in a statement on Tuesday it had received written submissions by a January 30 deadline from 44 U.N. member states, the Palestinians, as well from the United Nations itself, the Arab League and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. The court said the statements were confidential at this stage but they might be made public when it starts its deliberations on February 23 on whether Israel must under international law tear down the concrete and razor wire barrier.

A court spokeswoman declined to give a breakdown of how many of the submissions supported or opposed the proposition.

Taiwan proposes DMZ with rival China

TAIPEI—Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian called on China on Tuesday to set up a demilitarised zone between the bitter rivals and swap envoys, proposals unlikely to win over a communist mainland leadership bent on re-covering the island.

Under fire at home and abroad for stirring up tensions with Beijing, Chen made the proposal while defending plans to hold a referendum alongside the March 20 presidential election—a move China sees as a step towards independence and says could lead to war.

“Taiwan faces the world's most severe missile threat. It is anticipated that by 2005, communist China will have deployed 600 ballistic missiles pointed at Taiwan, with their accuracy greatly enhanced so that they can strike major military bases with little or no warning,” Chen told a news conference.

“The establishment of a demilitarised zone (DMZ), such as the removal of com-

bat personnel, equipment and deployed missiles, creates a buffer zone in terms of time and space,” he said. Chen did not specify where the zone would be. Taiwan holds several small islands in the strait dividing it from China and China's missiles are deployed mainly in the provinces facing the island.

China regards self-governing Taiwan as part of its territory and has been angered by Chen's referendum plan. Some countries including Taipei's main supporter, the United States, have criticised Chen's move.

China's Foreign Ministry and Taiwan Affairs Office declined comment, but a Communist Party magazine said any military action against Taiwan would “re-cieve the support and sympathy of the international community” because the island had provoked China.

“Striking only after the enemy has struck is a just cause to dispatch troops,” Outlook magazine said.



A Palestinian man bypasses the newly built wall separating east Jerusalem from the West Bank village of Abu Dis, on Tuesday.

ceedings.

Last week, the United States and Britain both filed statements with the court supporting Israel's objection, even though both countries have expressed concern about the barrier's route. One senior U.S. official said the barrier's fate should not be decided by the World Court but through negotiation.

In a separate statement, the court said it had rejected a bid by Israel to have an Egyptian judge, Nabil Elaraby, removed from the deliberations about the barrier. Israel had accused Elaraby of being “actively engaged in opposition to Israel”. Israel might one day be willing to hand over some Israeli Arab areas to Palestinian rule in exchange for Jewish settlements in the West Bank, a senior Israeli official said on Tuesday.

The suggestion was floated the day after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon stunned friends and foes by saying the Jewish state could relinquish Jewish

settlements in the Gaza Strip. A spokesman for Sharon said that if there was any shift in the border it would be done only by mutual consent and not through unilateral separation steps that Israel is planning if talks with the Palestinians fail. A prominent Israeli Arab parliamentarian denounced the idea because he said it equated his community with settlers in occupied territories.

Arabs make up almost 20 percent of Israel's population, but friction has been with Jews during more than three years of conflict with the Palestinians. There is growing concern among Jews that the balance is shifting in favour of Arabs because of their much higher birth rate.

“It was suggested that, considering the demographic problems facing Israel, in the context of an agreement with the Palestinian entity, it will ask to move the border so that the entity will have full jurisdiction over the people there,”

said Sharon's spokesman, Ranan Gissin. “In return, Israel would extend itself to those clusters of Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank), in order to establish a demographic balance.”

Ahmed Tibi, an Israeli Arab lawmaker, rejected the proposal. “This plan is very dangerous, immoral and uncivilised. We do not accept being dealt with as settlers. The issue of settlers should be sorted by international law because their existence is illegal,” he told Reuters. “We are not a chess piece that can be moved from one place to another according to the liking of Israeli officials.”

Although Israeli Arabs complain of discrimination in Israel, they are much better off financially than they might be in the West Bank, where the per capita GDP is by some estimates less than one twentieth of that for an Israeli.

Europe joins the race to put a man on Mars

LONDON—A European could step out onto the surface of Mars within three decades, under European Space Agency (ESA) plans spelled out on Tuesday.

The plans are more precise than the broad U.S. goals of sending a man back to the moon by 2020 and to Mars by 2030, revealed last month by President George W. Bush.

“We think it is technically feasible to have a manned mission to the moon between 2020 and 2025 and then to Mars between 2030 and 2035,” said Franco Ongaro, project manager of the ESA's fledgling Aurora space exploration programme.

“We need to go back to the moon before we can go to Mars,” he told an audience of space scientists, ac-

demies and industrialists.

“None of the people who worked on the Apollo programme are around now. We need to learn how to walk before we can run,” he added. Ongaro denied there was open competition with the U.S. space agency NASA, and said he expected the Americans, Europeans and Russians—all of whom have Martian goals—to be in contact with each other.

Under ESA plans, there will be a mission in 2007 to test a vehicle that can withstand far higher re-entry speeds than currently experienced by those returning from the moon. This will be followed two years later by ExoMars, a robot mission to Mars in search of life—past and present—and in 2014 by a mission to bring

Martian material back to earth.

Colin Pillinger, the chief scientist behind the missing Beagle 2 Mars probe that was supposed to land on the planet on Christmas day, but was never heard from, said it was crucial to find out if there was life there before a human arrives. “You can sterilise a robot. But you cannot do the same to an astronaut. Inevitably a human will introduce microbes to the planet and contaminate it,” he told the meeting.

Having established whether there is or was life on Mars and proved the landing, take-off and re-entry technology, ESA then plans within a decade to send a manned mission to the moon to test new life-support systems. It will also

look closely at the physiological and psychological aspects of long duration space missions—a worthwhile round trip to Mars would take nearly four years.

By 2026 the manned mission to the Red Planet will be nearly ready—with a final robot mission to replicate the trip and test all the technologies—followed in 2030 by a cargo mission carrying supplies ahead of the manned shot. Then, if everything goes according to plan, in 2033 the ESA's manned Mars shot will take off.

“This is a roadmap, a plan and plans change. But this is the most exciting space adventure,” Ongaro said.

Next North Korea nuclear talks set for February 25

SEOUL—North Korea said on Tuesday it would resume talks over its nuclear arm ambitions in Beijing on Feb. 25 with the United States, China and neighboring countries.

The date for a second round of talks was given after months of intensive shuttle diplomacy since the first six-party session ended without progress in August. The other three participants are Russia, Japan and South Korea. China responded to North Korea's announcement by saying it hoped for substantial results and a "written consensus" this time. A senior Russian official said he did not expect a breakthrough but the talks could still be useful.

South Korea said it hoped to set up a working group to tackle technical issues.

"The DPRK and the U.S., the major parties concerned to the six-way talks, and China, the host country, agreed to resume the next round of the six-way talks from February 25 after having a series of discussions," the North's KCNA news agency said. DPRK stands for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. North Korea's official name.

"We hope that these talks will be successful," U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said in Washington on Tuesday. He did not elaborate.

The United States wants North Korea to commit by the end of the next round to

dismantling any nuclear arms programmes. Washington has offered then to lay out in detail how it could guarantee not to attack the state President George W. Bush called part of an "axis of evil" with Iran and pre-war Iraq.

One U.S. official suggested that Washington and Beijing had agreed to hold the new round of talks despite uncertainty about whether they will result in a statement in which Pyongyang would agree to abandon any nuclear weapons programs. Asked if there would be a statement, a U.S. official said: "What the six parties have done—primarily the United States and China—is agreed to finesse it."

"The aim here is to get some kind of clear commitment to dismantle and we are prepared to offer security assurances in exchange," he added. "That is the agreed-upon desired outcome, as opposed to an agreed-upon statement."

Freeze his nuclear activities in exchange for energy aid and diplomatic recognition from the United States as the first step in resolving the dispute.

The crisis erupted in October 2002 when U.S. officials, including chief North Korea negotiator James Kelly, reported that North Korean officials had told them at a meeting Pyongyang was pursuing a clandestine nuclear arms programme. North Korea has since denied the U.S. account but Kelly reiterated last month there had been no ambiguity at the meeting. Other officials have said the U.S. case is based on the intelligence that prompted the North's initial admission.

On Monday, Pakistani officials said the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb had admitted to selling nuclear secrets to North Korea as well as to Libya and Iran.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue responded to Pyongyang's announcement of the talks by saying Beijing hoped they would produce a written consensus. "The conditions for talks are there," she told reporters. "We hope they can achieve substantial results."



Turkish rescue workers carry a survivor Sabiha Akpinar on a stretcher Tuesday after she was pulled out from the rubble of a 10-storey apartment block which collapsed in Konya, central Turkey.

Diggers brought in to collapsed building

KONYA, Turkey—Rescue workers brought in heavy equipment on Tuesday to help search for dozens of people feared trapped in the rubble of a 10-storey apartment block that collapsed in central Turkey killing at least 15.

A much higher toll was feared since as many as 120 people may have been inside the modern 36-apartment building which came down on Monday night in a well-to-do district of the city of Konya, 250 km (155 miles) south of the capital Ankara. Rescue workers have been using bare hands to dig through tightly packed layers of crumpled concrete to search for survivors.

Turkish media said 30 injured had been pulled out, several hours after they were trapped. But with night falling again, Konya mayor Mustafa Ozkaya said heavier help was needed.

"Because we are sure there are no survivors on the top two floors of the building, we will move the ruins from there with machines and continue our work," he told Anatolian news agency.

Rescue workers said anyone on the lower floors of the building had a very small chance of survival. "We're coming across many bodies but our priority is to find survivors, so we're not doing anything about the dead at the moment," rescuer Hakan Korkut earlier told Anatolian.

As the first victims were buried, reconfirmations started over why the relatively new building crashed to the

ground. Officials blamed shoddy construction, although some witnesses said they had heard an explosion.

A senior fire officer said the fabric of the building was very bad quality. "There is hardly any concrete, all sand," he told private news channel NTV.

Poor building standards have often been blamed in Turkey for building collapses and the often disproportionately high death toll from earth tremors in the quake-prone country, but hardly any builders or developers have ever been convicted. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan promised tough action.

Brazil rains leave tens of thousands homeless

BRASILIA, Brazil—Mudslides and floods have forced more than 40,000 Brazilians to leave their homes and killed 84 since heavy rains began in late December, civil defense authorities said on Tuesday.

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva is to visit areas of Brazil's usually parched northeast on Wednesday where entire communities have been submerged by rains which have caused 18 deaths nationwide since Friday.

Wealthy Sao Paulo state has also been hit hard, 29 people killed by the weather and 16 bridges destroyed. Motorists have been swept away after highways turned into rivers.

Rain depends on summer rains to grow coffee, oranges and sugar but this year's rainfall has been unusually high due to the clouds that swept into the country and failed to budge. Torrential rains have hammered the entire coastal and central-west regions of Brazil and turned areas of the parched Northeast into lakes.

Rains are expected to continue. The government is scrambling to rescue people trapped in towns that have become islands, house people in schools and shelters and tend to dozens of injured.

Pakistan Army:

Nuclear scientist dealt independently

ISLAMABAD—The father of Pakistan's atomic bomb acted independently in selling nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea, the military said on Tuesday, denying the trade continued under the current government.

Officials said on Monday that Abdul Qadeer Khan, a national hero since helping Pakistan test the Islamic world's first nuclear bomb in 1998, had confessed to selling nuclear secrets to the three countries, lifting the lid on one of the biggest proliferation scandals in history.

The probe is potentially embarrassing for President Pervez Musharraf, the army chief who took power in a 1999 coup and became a key ally of Washington in its "war on terror".

Monday's New York Times quoted U.S. officials as saying nuclear aid flowed to North Korea until 2002 and to Libya last year. On Tuesday, the Washington Post quoted a friend of Khan as saying the scientist told investigators he gave North Korea nuclear know-how with the knowledge of senior military commanders, including Musharraf.

Military spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan dismissed both charges, saying it was Musharraf who put in place safeguards against proliferation. "No such activity has taken place since the Nuclear Command Authority came into being in February 2000," he said, adding: "Before the establishment of the command authority, A.Q.

Khan was fully autonomous." Diplomats and analysts believe Khan could not have acted without the knowledge of the military, which kept close tabs on the nuclear programme and guarded the scientist himself.

A senior military official told local journalists on Sunday Khan had made a detailed statement confessing to supplying designs, hardware and materials used to make enriched uranium for atomic bombs to Iran, Libya and North Korea.

Khan is reported to have said he was acting on the indirect instructions of two former army chiefs, Generals Aslam Beg and Jehangir Karamat, a claim Sultan said had been assessed and found wrong. "He was fully autonomous in decision-making. He had the full authority to use the budget and was given that freedom to ensure the programme went on unhindered. Probably he has breached that trust, that is what one can say."

Sultan said that until 2000, Khan was answerable only to the president, but the president was unaware of all his activities.

Ford, GM post weaker sales as cold hurts

DETROIT—General Motors Corp. and Ford Motor Co. on Tuesday posted surprisingly weak U.S. vehicle sales for January as an aging car lineup and cold weather hurt results, but Nissan scored a 26 percent jump, helped by its new SUV and pickup.

Wall Street analysts had expected that the strengthening U.S. economy and high incentives would push U.S. vehicle sales up from last year, when the run-up to the Iraq war kept consumers on edge.

But Paul Ballew, GM's head of industry analysis, said that industry sales will likely be flat against last January's annual rate of 16.1 million vehicles. Consumers turned a cold shoulder to car sales after the cold weather kept them away from dealerships in many parts of the country.

"There's been no question that there's been some sales opportunities lost in the Northeast because of the weather. Nothing dramatic, but definitely an impact," said Jed Connolly, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Nissan North America.

The mantra inside GM is "Fast Start in '04," company officials said last month, but the automaker's passenger vehicle sales dropped 1.8 percent to 294,745 cars and trucks in January, excluding its Saab brand. Analysts had expected GM sales to be up as much as 5 percent.

Ford sales for its U.S. brands fell 9.7 percent in January to 212,449 cars and trucks. Sales percentage change figures are adjusted to account for 26-selling days in January vs. 25 last year.

China launches \$7.4 billion rust belt revival programme

BEIJING—China is trying to revive its downcast rust belt in the northeast with a new \$7.4 billion, backed by a new bank, state media said on Tuesday.

The northeastern provinces, home to 110 million people, were once the crown jewel of industry under China's centrally planned economy. But market reforms began in the late 1970s have led to the collapse of state firms in the region, leading to sporadic protests by laid-off workers and mountains of bad loans at state banks that had lent heavily according to government directives.

Half of the 100 planned



Travellers board a passenger jet belonging to Irish discount airline Ryanair at Charleroi airport, in southern Belgium, on Tuesday.

EU rules against Ryanair in state subsidy fight

BRUSSELS—Low-cost airline Ryanair was ordered on Tuesday to repay millions of euros in Belgian subsidies, a decision its combative CEO slammed as a disaster for budget travel and traffic-rattled regional airports. The European Commission decided some of the hand-outs paid to use Charleroi airport broke EU law and Ryanair will have to return about four million of 15 million euros in state aid.

Transport Commissioner Loyola de Palacio said the airline had to respect the rules of the game but insisted the decision would favour the low-cost industry.

State markets were more positive than Ryanair chief Michael O'Leary, at one point sending the firm's shares up more than 10 percent. One trader said Brussels had only given the com-

pany a "slap on the wrist". O'Leary said he would appeal to the European courts, and the Walloon region which owns Charleroi said it could follow suit. But rivals EasyJet and Virgin Express welcomed the ruling as creating a more level airfield. "Am I the good guy? Absolutely. Are they the bad guys? They're the evil empire if this is the kind of decision they come up with," O'Leary said a news conference.

"This decision confirms that the European Commission intends to increase costs and air fares for consumers," he declared, sitting in front of a day-glo yellow backdrop emblazoned with "EU bans low fares!" in black letters for hammer home his point.

Ryanair and other low-cost carriers have changed the face of European travel flying to obscure airports at rock

bottom fares. Charleroi airport, in a declining steel town south of Brussels with 20 percent unemployment, gets a million passengers a year.

O'Leary said the EU ruling would stymie this trend. "The result of this decision is that the European Commission will prevent publicly owned airports competing with privately owned airports," he said.

The Commission mounted a fierce defence. De Palacio said the Commission was allowing the carrier to keep up to 75 percent of the money it got from Charleroi. O'Leary described the amount of the repayment in a Reuters interview as "immaterial".

De Palacio estimated the decision could force Ryanair to increase ticket prices by six to eight euros for a return fare, but O'Leary said the rise would be double that amount.

Cellphone sales boom in 2003, and more is coming

AMSTERDAM—Global sales of mobile phones exceeded even the most bullish expectations in 2003 and market researchers said on Tuesday the handset industry will enjoy an even better 2004 as new, fancy models catch on.

Mobile phone sales to consumers topped 510 million units in 2003 and will exceed 560 million units in 2004, according to the big three research groups that track the world's biggest consumer electronics segment of mobile handsets. Gartner Dataquest, IDC and Strategy Analytics.

"It is an exceptionally strong market. It's much stronger than the handset makers themselves have indicated," said Gartner analyst Ben Wood.

Most handset makers said the total market was around 460 million units in 2003, while market researchers themselves had expected 500 million, up from around 420 million in 2002.

It is the first year since 2000 that handset demand rose more than 10 percent as the sector strove to cater to both emerging markets and choosier customers in rich economies. Cellphone producers are now benefiting from booming emerging markets such as China, India, Brazil and Russia, where they sell relatively cheap handsets to first-time buyers, as well as from existing customers in the United States, Europe, Japan and South Korea, where they are replacing old models.

Japan is leading this trend. Two years after the world's first third-generation mobile networks were launched there, consumers are now embracing services such as video conferencing on models with built-in cameras and

large colour screens.

In North America and Western Europe, consumers are also ditching their old monochrome models for those with colour displays and cameras, but use less-advanced data services such as picture messaging because networks have not been upgraded.

Smartphones, which feature calendars, email, pictures, music and other services in one device, were one of the fastest growing new categories, IDC said. Worldwide shipments for 2003 rose 182 percent to 6.6 million devices.

Strategy Analytics was the most bullish in its 2004 forecast, estimating shipments of 585 million units this year, but analysts said that most gains from record shipments are wiped out by fierce price pressure. The world's top six vendors still take about 80 percent of the global market, but aggressive Asian rivals, many of which are based in China, put pressure on prices and are gaining market share.

The losers were market leader Nokia from Finland, whose 2003 market share slipped 0.3 percentage points to 34.8 percent, and U.S.-based number two Motorola, whose share dropped to 14.5 percent from 16.3 percent. Strategy Analytics said.

South Korea's Samsung Electronics gained one percentage point to 10.8 percent.

Germany's Siemens closed the year at 8.4 percent, up from 8.2 percent as it had a stellar fourth quarter.

Japan's LG and Japanese-Swedish joint venture Sony Ericsson battled for the number five spot as both closed 2003 with a 5.3 percent market share. LG however was the fastest grower in the top six, while Sony Ericsson just managed to hold on to last year's market share.

The vendors themselves have given different market shares which are usually higher than those of market research firms. One of the reasons is that they underplay the total size of the market, which gives them a relatively larger chunk.

Gartner said mobile phones continued to sell well, even after the peak Christmas holiday selling season. "We're not seeing any let-up in demand. Over Chinese New Year (in late January) we continued to see strong sales to consumers. There is some seasonality and the first quarter is not going to be as strong as the fourth, but some manufacturers are still struggling to meet demand," Wood said.

Stock Market Report

Key Stock Movements February 3 2004

| | DAYS CLOSE | CHANGE IN POINTS | 2003 YEAR HIGH | 2003 YEAR LOW |
|-----------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| NEW YORK | 10,505.18 | +6.00 | 10,702.51 | 9,524.06 |
| | | | (Jan 19/04) | (Jan 14/03) |
| LONDON | 4,390.6 | +9.2 | 4,518.1 | 3,287.0 |
| | | | (Jan 19/04) | (Mar 12/03) |
| TOKYO | 10,641.92 | -134.81 | 11,161.71 | 7,607.88 |
| | | | (Oct 20/03) | (Apr 20/03) |
| FRANKFURT | 4,057.51 | -14.09 | 4,151.83 | 2,202.96 |
| | | | (Jan 23/04) | (Mar 12/03) |

London Currency Fixing Rates February 3 2004

Following are the middle exchange rates for leading currencies against the dollar:

| | CURRENT | HIGH | LOW |
|--------------------|---------|--------|--------|
| Euro | 1.2534 | 1.2599 | 1.2481 |
| Japanese Yen | 105.47 | 105.83 | 105.25 |
| British Pound | 1.8375 | 1.8424 | 1.8195 |
| Australian Dollar | 0.7644 | 0.7674 | 0.7585 |
| Brazilian Real | 2.915 | 2.941 | 2.913 |
| Canadian Dollar | 1.3375 | 1.3391 | 1.3279 |
| Hong Kong Dollar | 7.7749 | 7.7765 | 7.7732 |
| Mexican Peso | 11.085 | 11.112 | 10.988 |
| South African Rand | 6.89 | 6.97 | 6.99 |

Gold (ounce) \$399.88 (\$95.55)

A spokesman for the State

To the so-called concerned parent: You are now spreading rumors!

Many of us (real parents and persons who know better) read your article in the opinion space of both daily newspapers on Monday, February 2, and on Tuesday, February 3, 2004, regarding a young man you are accusing of putting things on the Internet about a girl.

This article is exactly what

is expected from someone who has been trying to damage the reputation of a young man so dear to all of us. Why are you and others doing this? Jealousy and envy! That's all it is. If you are so sure that this young man is doing it, prove it and do something about it. Your article shows that you are of

the same mold like these sick person(s) who are jealous of this young man, and help them continue to spread their rumors. You have the gall to say that you heard that this happened before?

Maybe you have done this before! Shame on you because now you are willfully spreading rumors, which I'm

sure, was the intention of your article all along. And you claim to be a parent? You're clearly itching to mention his name, but because you know of what can happen to you when you're lying and slandering someone's name, you prefer to continue with your so-called devilish insinuations.

This young man's actions speak for themselves. He needs no accolades, because he just likes to be positive without calling attention or fanfare like many others do. There are many of us who are very grateful for what this young man has done and is still doing for the youth. Because of him, kids who have been wasting their time doing nothing are busy now doing something positive.

This is the person you and others are trying to destroy.

Check what's going on at the different schools where violence is almost a daily

occurrence. Contrary to what you and your group wants people to believe, this young man tries to be part of a solution, not the problem. And you know what, he's from here, he's ambitious, caring and he'll never do anything to hurt anybody, not even in your dreams.

So, you and others who are trying to destroy a positive young man from St. Maarten, shame on you. Find out more about the Internet and "how easy it is to make things look so real while it is not" and how easy it is to put the blame on someone if you want to, especially when you hate the person like it appears you and others in your group do for your own reasons.

There are more than 40 parents of children who know this young man, who trust him with their kids, who know that he's sincere and who have committed them-

selves to continue to support him. For your information, there are many more persons who all know that something is fishy about your story and who can read the hatred and jealousy you have towards him and his family in your letter. We know what you and the others are trying to do to him and his family. Back off all of you, because we will stand by him all the way. In closing, if we find out that YOU are the one who's behind all of this or you know and are willfully aiding he/she or those who are trying to deliberately slander this young man's name, believe me, we will prosecute you and the others!

We know that there are some other positive young people on your list that you would like to bring down... But believe me, enough is enough.

A real parent

Thoughts from Saba

It looks like the Dutch Government is worried about underspending of the Development Aid money to the Netherlands Antilles. When I drive around and see where all need retaining walls alongside the roads to keep the hills intact, I notice where quite a bit of this money could be spent.

This would help in two ways: 1. Those men that work for Public Works could work on these walls and the money that is now spent on them could be used for medical purposes.

2. Saba workmen build walls from Fort Bay to Hellsgate and never had more than the foreman that worked along with them to oversee the job. For such projects it is not necessary to have consultants, engineers, etc. This money paid to them could be used to give employment towards retaining walls, etc. At the beginning these jobs were carried out as (werk verschaffing) creating employment.

I feel the island govern-

ment should put more pressure on the Dutch government so that when granting development aid it can be used to its maximum for the island.

When it rains so much water runs off the roads and into the guts taking the loose soil to the sea. If there were cisterns much of this water could be collected and used for other purposes. One such use could be agriculture. Some of these visiting experts should be taken to Hellsgate mountain and see what a few people are doing there also with the help of water.

Every now and then I see Notary Speetjens showing off something from his garden on St. Maarten. Will Johnson does the same thing while others show off the biggest bulls on Saba. Now on Statia I see someone there started to show. These shows are done mostly to catch people's eyes and encourage others to do likewise.

The first time I went to

Statia a group of boys went in a 16-foot boat with an outboard engine. What attracted us were the cattle, the fields of yams with the corn growing in between for the yam vines to run up on, and the long rows of sweet potatoes.

Around that time a Dutch farmer came to live on Statia and people from Saba would order goods from the farmer on Statia the same way they order now from St. Maarten.

A lady from here ordered a bowl and when the boat came down with the goods there were this beautiful bull that was born from a pregnant cow he brought from Holland. The invoice was to the lady that had ordered the bowl with a set of instructions. Either the Dutch couldn't spell bowl or the lady couldn't spell bowl.

No country can survive without agriculture or should have to depend on the country that produces.

T. Eric Johnson

Paris is ready to talk

By Jim Hoagland

PARIS — If he is tempted to say "I told you so" about Iraq, President Jacques Chirac stifles the urge completely during an hour-long conversation at the Elysee Palace. He insists on looking ahead, not back.

This allows him to bypass lingering differences with the Bush administration on the Middle East and to suggest instead that it is time to begin serious work on improving French-American relations.

The quarrels of a year ago, when Chirac led foreign opposition to the impending war in Iraq and called for a more "multipolar" world, are not forgotten here any more than they are in Washington. But the chance to shrink the French-American disputes back to manageable proportions feels real, especially when Chirac describes specific steps that can — in fact, must, he says — be taken.

France's recurring criticisms of American hegemony, the role of the dollar, Hollywood's taste and its power, and other topics have never been much welcome in Washington. But direct expressions of disagreement from Paris have often been useful when the dialogue is open enough, and friendly enough, to permit them to be considered seriously.

This has not been the case recently. Getting back to that modest state of relations is a worthwhile goal, even as differences persist.

So it may be progress when Chirac begins with what I count as a small semantic concession. (Words do still matter in France.) "Multipolar," he says, is not a code

word for challenging and reducing American power, as some critics charge. It is instead a way of describing a view of the world "that should reinforce the trans-Atlantic relationship."

"Inevitably in this new century we will see a number of important powers assert themselves," Chirac notes. "China, India, Europe, South America are examples. This leads to what I call a 'multipolar world.' Given human nature, the development of a number of big powers — that is, of strong multiple poles — could expand the risk of conflict. Those dangers are already quite large due to the power of modern weapons."

"So it is important in light of this for the countries of Europe and America, which share common roots and values, and globally have the same interests, to strengthen their union, precisely to work together to avoid such risks," he says, speaking in French.

"Ce n'est pas du wishful," he adds, speaking the final word in English for emphasis as he denies that what he is advocating is wishful thinking. "This is a positive vision of the world as it is and as it soon will be. Compared to that, differences on Iraq should take on less importance."

A chance to begin putting that sentiment into practice may come as early as Friday when Chirac's foreign minister, Dominique de Villepin, meets with Secretary of State Colin Powell over breakfast in New York. Relations between the two key officials have been particularly strained since de Villepin openly challenged Powell over Iraq last winter at the United Nations and

then spearheaded France's opposition to the war.

The diplomatic arguments have not prevented French and American anti-terrorist officials from establishing cooperation that both sides describe as effective. Nor has it stopped 150 French special operations troops from fighting under American command in Afghanistan.

Under Chirac, France has in fact reshaped its relationship with NATO to take into account the changing nature of global insecurity. He underlines this by telling me: "You have to be realistic in a changing world. We have updated our vision, which once held that NATO had geographic limits. The idea of a regional NATO no longer exists, as the alliance's involvement in Afghanistan demonstrates. And we are not against a role in Iraq for NATO if it comes to that."

Moreover, Washington and Paris have in the last few

days come to agreement on a new command structure for NATO's Rapid Reaction Force, French officials report. The United States had initially resisted assigning two key slots to French generals but relented last week rather than prolong a debilitating dispute that would have kept French troops out of the new force.

The White House is still considering an invitation from Chirac to President Bush to join the 60th anniversary of the allied D-Day landings in Normandy on June 6. Chirac is also willing to host Bush at a dinner and private conversations in Paris on the night before the formal ceremonies.

This is a conversation worth having despite — or perhaps precisely because of — the big differences that loom unresolved between these two leaders and their countries. Paris is not turning, but it is ready to talk.



Letters

The Daily Herald welcomes letters from readers. Please note that letters must include the writer's name, address and daytime telephone number. Letters without that information will not be published.

In case a writer does not want to see his or her name printed in the newspaper, this should be clearly indicated, preferably with mention of the reason for wishing to remain anonymous.

Letters should not be more than 400 words in length and may be edited at the Editor's discretion.

Send letters to The Daily Herald, 22 Bush Road, Phillipsburg, via fax 542-5913 or E-mail: dherald@sintmaarten.net.



U.S. actress Juliette Lewis and French actor Vincent Cassel pose at the IMAGINA digital imaging festival in Monaco, on Tuesday. Lewis and Cassel star in the newly-released western movie "Blueberry", which is based on a popular cartoon strip character and calls on substantial use of hi-tech digitalized special effects.

MTV blames Jackson for exposed breast

NEW YORK—Singer Janet Jackson masterminded the Super Bowl halftime stunt that left her right breast exposed and prompted a federal probe into television indecency, the head of MTV said on Tuesday.

"Janet Jackson engineered it," MTV Chief Executive Tom Freston told Reuters in an interview.

The blame on Jackson comes on a second day of fallout after pop idol Justin Timberlake tore off half of Jackson's black leather bustier while the pair were singing a duet, exposing her right breast at the conclusion of Sunday's Super Bowl halftime show.

Freston, whose company produced the halftime show for CBS, said Timberlake was informed of the stunt just moments before he took the stage with Jackson. MTV and CBS are both owned by Viacom.

The Super Bowl is the highest-rated U.S. television event, watched by almost 90 million people. The stunt, which Timberlake said was due to a "wardrobe malfunction," sparked widespread viewer complaints.

Federal Communications Commission regulators launched an investigation amid calls for the government to take a tougher stance on regulating indecency on tele-

vision. "There's now going to be an FCC investigation into the nipple," Freston told reporters at a news conference.

Jackson took the blame but said on Monday her stunt went further than she intended: "The decision to have a costume reveal at the end of my half-time show performance was made after final rehearsals. MTV was completely unaware of it. It was not my intention that it go as far as it did."

Freston said neither CBS nor the National Football League has rescinded or demanded a refund of MTV's production

fees. But sources familiar with the situation said the incident could possibly cost CBS and the NFL millions of dollars.

The sources told Reuters that Time Warner Inc. unit America Online may now seek a partial refund of the estimated \$10 million it paid as a major Super Bowl advertiser and exclusive halftime show sponsor.

"While AOL was the sponsor of the Super Bowl Half-time Show, we did not produce it," the company said in a statement. "Like the NFL, we were surprised and disappointed with certain elements

of the show."

The company said the exposure of Jackson's breast means it cannot now broadcast the halftime extravaganza on its web site for 25 million AOL members and visitors. "In deference to our membership and the fans, AOL and AOL.com will not be presenting the Halftime Show online as originally planned," the company said.

McDonald's Corp., which uses Timberlake as a pitch man, said it found the incident was inappropriate but that it will stand by the singer.



Actress Drew Barrymore touches her newly unveiled star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame during ceremonies in Hollywood, on Tuesday. Barrymore, 28, who has been acting most of her life, stars in the new comedy film "50 First Dates" with actor Adam Sandler.

Jackson, Timberlake still slated for Grammy Awards

LOS ANGELES—Singer Janet Jackson and pop icon Justin Timberlake will appear on Sunday's Grammy Awards as planned despite the uproar over their bumping and grinding Super Bowl duet that left Jackson's breast exposed, the host of the Grammys said on Tuesday.

In a show of caution, however, CBS said it would air the Grammys with a longer tape-delay so that network censors could edit any crude language or behavior from the telecast. The network said the length of the delay, which will let it delete audio and video, has yet to be determined.

"Janet is still scheduled to be a presenter and Justin is still scheduled to be a performer," said Ron Roeker, a spokesman for the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, which will present the 46th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

The awards will be broadcast on CBS, which faces an inquiry by regulators over whether its broadcast of Sunday's controversial Super Bowl half-time show and the sexualized rendition of Timberlake's tune "Rock Your Body" violated indecency standards.

The awards will be broadcast on CBS, which faces an inquiry by regulators over whether its broadcast of Sunday's controversial Super Bowl half-time show and the sexualized rendition of Timberlake's tune "Rock Your Body" violated indecency standards.

Roeker said the Recording Academy has everything in place to present a live show that allows artists to be themselves while keeping the broadcast family friendly. "We want to enable the artists to be as expressive as they want. We've done live event television for

decades. We have things in place. It's rock and roll and hip hop," he said.

"We're as prepared as possible to handle what comes our way. We're doing nothing we haven't done in the past," he said. CBS said it was working with the Recording Academy on the new procedures. In the past, the network has used a five-second delay that allowed only for audio cuts.

Others in the recording industry are expecting that performers at the Grammys will either spoof Jackson and Timberlake or try to top them. "I'm sure there will be some jokes. Whoever opens the show will probably make some reference to the incident," said one music industry executive who asked not to be named.



U.S. actor Sylvester Stallone poses with German police upon his arrival for a reception at the town hall in Berlin, Germany on Tuesday. Stallone will be awarded on Wednesday with a "Golden Camera" award by a popular German TV-magazine.

Berlin film festival's rise blunted by Cannes

BERLIN—The Berlin film festival's bid to rival Cannes suffered a setback when the French festival swiped three top films from the Berlin programme at the last minute.

But Berlin director Dieter Kosslick is no longer irritated. He said in an interview he believes there is plenty of room for an ascendant Berlin and Venice alongside the top-rated Cannes.

"There are no hard feelings

anyone," Kosslick told Reuters ahead of the 11-day festival that begins on Thursday. "We're all competitors. Sometimes you win. Sometimes you lose."

Kosslick had to reprint his programme after three films, including an eagerly awaited production about revolutionary icon Che Guevara called "Motorcycle Diaries," ditched Berlin for offers to enter Cannes in May. Berlin will

screen the companion "The Making of Motorcycle Diaries" as scheduled—before the film appears in Cannes.

Kosslick has won most of his battles since taking over three years ago, turning a somewhat sleepy giant into a star-packed event that has become a vital launching pad at the start of the year for Hollywood and European films.

"The Berlinale has made important strides forward and benefited from positive developments," Kosslick said. "A lot of stars come to the festival, there are films that stimulate intellectual discussion, there is lively trade in film rights and the public takes part. All the ingredients of a good mixture are coming together."

Expected at news conferences and on the festival's red carpet international premieres this year are Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Cate Blanchett, Juliette Binoche, Julie Delpy, Peter Fonda, Robin Williams, Woody Harrelson and Ethan Hawke.

Directors Ron Howard, Anthony Minghella, Richard Linklater and Tom Tykwer are also due to face the at-times famously blunt questions from the hordes of journalists from 80 nations. The festival opens on Thursday with "Cold Mountain," an out of competition Civil War drama by Minghella that just won Renee Zellweger a Golden Globe Award for best supporting actress.

The Berlinale, unlike its rivals in Cannes and Venice, is open to the public, making available 400,000 tickets for ordinary cinema-goers alongside special screenings for 3,500 journalists and some 12,000 film rights buyers.

Defense wants Kobe Bryant statement to police out

EAGLE, Colorado—Basketball star Kobe Bryant shook hands with two detectives and was told he was free to leave the entire time they quizzed him about accusations he raped a 19-year-old Colorado woman the day before, both officers testified on Tuesday.

Bryant's lawyers argued in court that a tape recording of the interview should be thrown out because the 25-year-old Los Angeles Laker was never read his rights by the detectives. Bryant, who missed Monday's hearing before Eagle County District Court Judge Terry Ruckriegle through an unexplained illness, was present for Tuesday's hearing.

The day's first witness, Eagle County sheriff's detective Douglas Winters, spent nearly three hours on the stand answering detailed questions about whether police obtained Bryant's consent to speak with him.

Defense attorney Hal Haddon went to pains to show that the police were inept and even had to be paid to judge to get a proper warrant to seize clothing Bryant wore the day of the incident. Police obtained a warrant to escort Bryant, who had undergone out-patient knee surgery hours before, to a hospital to obtain DNA samples like hair and bodily fluids that investigators need for sexual assault cases.

But Colorado law requires police to find the person during the day, rather than after midnight as in Bryant's case. The detectives said they were not aware of that rule. Police are also required to take a suspect to the hospital as quickly as possible and not to interrogate him.

Bryant spoke with police for about 75 minutes after approaching them in the parking lot of the posh Colorado resort hotel where he was staying, saying "what's up fellas?" and shook their hands, Winters said.

Bryant's bodyguard, Los Angeles police officer Troy Laster, left Bryant at Bryant's request with the two detectives in the parking lot.

An undercover police officer, referred to only as "De-

ductive A" to protect his identity, said Laster approached him in the hotel lobby several minutes later and said, "If this is what I think it is, I don't want to be involved anyway."

But under cross-examination by defense attorney Pamela Mackey, "Detective A" admitted he had not mentioned Laster's comments in his initial report on July 2, adding them in a supplemental report on July 30.



Actor Kurt Russell, star of the new film "Miracle" and companion actress Goldie Hawn pose together at the premiere of the film in Hollywood. The film recounts the story of coach Herb Brooks, played by Russell and the 1980 United States Olympic hockey team he coached which defeated the Russians to win the Gold medal, at the Lake Placid winter Olympics in 1980. The film opens February 6 in the United States.



Singer Luther Vandross (R) is shown with RCA Music Group Chairman Clive Davis, who holds a platinum plaque of "Dance With My Father", Vandross's most recent album which has sold over one million copies and received five Grammy nominations, in this photograph released by Dan Klores Communications, on Tuesday.

Channel 15 (local) St. Maarten Cable TV

| Local time | Programme |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Wednesday, February 4 | |
| 8:00am | Replay AVS News |
| 8:30am | Faces and Places |
| 10:00am | GIS Press Briefing |
| 6:00pm | Westwood Park |
| 6:30pm | 2 The Max |
| 7:00pm | GIS Bulletin |
| 7:30pm | AVS News |
| 8:00pm | Speaking of Everything |
| 8:30pm | Prime time with Beverly Hyman |
| 9:00pm | Aruba Week in Review |
| 10:00pm | St. Maarten Lottery |
| 10:05pm | Replay Carlscope Travel |
| 10:35pm | AVS News |

BVN (Dutch/Flemish) TV Channel 46 St. Maarten Cable TV

| Local times | Programme |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Wednesday, February 4 | |
| 11:00am | NOS Journaal |
| 11:05am | Tik tak |
| 11:10am | Sesamstraat |
| 11:25am | Worl TV |
| 11:30am | Wiziek |
| 11:45am | Villa krakers |
| 12:00pm | Het klokhuis |
| 12:15pm | Museungasten |
| 12:35pm | Muziek clip NL |
| 12:40pm | Lingo |
| 1:00pm + 7:00pm | NOS Journaal |
| 1:20pm + 7:20pm | Twee vandaag |
| 2:00pm + 8:00pm | Nederlands nieuws |
| 2:05pm + 8:05pm | VRT Journaal |
| 2:40pm + 8:40pm | Muziek clip |
| 2:45pm + 8:45pm | Man bijt hond |
| 3:05pm + 9:05pm | B & W |
| 3:30pm + 9:30pm | NOS Journaal |
| 3:50pm + 9:50pm | Weerbericht |
| 3:55pm + 9:55pm | Voor Amalia |
| 4:10pm + 10:10pm | Una voce particolare |
| 4:50pm + 10:50pm | Vinger aan de pols |
| 5:30pm + 11:30pm | Nov/Den Haag vandaag |
| 6:10pm + 12:10am | NOS Sportjournaal |

Garfield®

by Jim Davis



Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Watterson



By Linda C. Black

Today's Birthday (Feb. 4). At least one of your fears will prove groundless this year, much to your delight. The objective is to learn from an old trauma and use your knowledge to benefit others. It still may hurt if you do this, but it'll sure hurt an awful lot less than it would otherwise.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21-April 19) - Today is a 5 - You may have to be more reactive than you'd like in this situation. You'd rather be in charge of the operation, but that hasn't happened yet. Tomorrow and the next day look good, however.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) - Today is an 8 - You won't have to venture very far to find something that you need. It's closer to home than you thought it would be, in a form you should recognize.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) - Today is a 6 - Gather in as much as you can, of whatever you can get. Stitch it away in a safe place. You'll find a good use for it later.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) - Today is a 7 - Your sense of humor should be good, and that's a marvelous blessing. A person you respect will give you reasons why you can't do what you want to do. Listen respectfully, but don't give up.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) - Today is a 6 - Anticipate possible communication problems. This includes, but is not limited to, typos, misrouted packages and lost receipts. Also, be nice to a sensitive co-worker.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) - Today is an 8 - A conflict between a friend and a loved one can be ironed out with your advice. You have a more objective point of view. Teach the two of them to get along.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) - Today is a 7 - It may seem as if everyone wants something from you, but what? They can't make up their minds. Since that's not your strongest talent either, don't let them push you into anything. Stall.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) - Today is an 8 - The best-laid plans of mice and men can get all bungled up. Women can be more adaptable, though. They make do with whatever they have. Keep that in mind.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) - Today is a 7 - Your sense of humor should come shining through, no matter what's going on. This is a welcome relief not only for you but for everybody you're around. You're gifted, and you're a gift.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) - Today is a 7 - As you consider a compromise, take costs into account. No point in getting something you don't really need. You can do just fine without.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) - Today is a 6 - Overexertion can cause aches and pains, so don't push yourself too hard. Slow and steady wins this race, or at least gets you to the finish line. Later is better than never.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) - Today is a 7 - You and your partner can work up a plan to make intended changes. You're good at being spontaneous, but scheduling doesn't hurt.



SEND LETTERS TO P.O. BOX 624

Dear Queenie,

There is this great looking girl that I like a lot, She has been hinting that she would like to go out with me, but I won't ask her out because I have seen her eating lunch at work and she has awful table manners. I mean AWFUL. I would be ashamed to be seen with her in public when she was eating.

Queenie, I would like to take her out if she could learn better manners, but how do I tell her I won't ask her out, without hurting her feelings?—Well bred

Dear Well bred,

It depends on how well you know her. If you don't know her well, there is not much you can say to her. However, if you know someone who does know her well, perhaps you could mention to them why you don't want to go out with her and hope they will drop a hint where it will do the most good.

On the other hand, if you do know her well enough, you could GENTLY suggest to her that she might want to change one or two small aspects of her eating habits. If she is receptive, take it from there. If not, consider her a lost cause.

Your question brings to mind a line from a Robert Burns poem: "Would some power the giftie g'us, to see ourselves as others see us!" Perhaps if this girl knew how she looks to others when she is eating, she might be motivated to learn better manners. These days, what with video cameras and such, it is not difficult to literally see ourselves as others see us. But we have to want to look!

Only notices of fundraising events, non-profit or educational notices will be placed in the Events/Notices column. Notices must reach The Daily Herald by 4:00pm to be published in the next edition.

Events

Wednesday, February 4

WEALTHY BUILDING SEMINAR

Place: Phillipsburg Jubilee Library

Time: 7:30pm

Price: Free

Thursday, February 5

BASKETBALL SEMINARS

organised by St. Maarten Basketball Association.

Place: L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium

Thursday time: 7:00pm. Thunders vs Sunz.

Friday, February 6

PRE-VALENTINE DAY

DINNER AND SHOW

organised by Sundial School to raise funds for the Graduation Fund. Many old favourite and new games.

Place: Sundial School

Time: 7:00-11:00pm sharp

Price: NAF. 25 or US \$15

Saturday, February 7

FUND-RAISING CAR WASH AND BBQ

organised by Learning Unlimited Student Council. Part of proceeds will be donated to the St. Maarten Science Fair Foundation.

Place: Learning Unlimited parking lot

Time: 11:00am to 3:00pm

Price: Car wash or BBQ, US \$6; both, \$10.

Tickets available from students and on the day at the school.

Saturday, February 7

FUND-RAISING FLEA MARKET

organised by Carib Swim Team Association.

Place: Tropicana Casino parking lot

Time: 7:00am to 12:30pm

For more information or to donate items in good condition, call 522-9575, 522-4045 or 559-0900.

Saturday, February 7

VALENTINE DAY BINGO

organised by St. Dominic High School. Proceeds will go towards

the purchase of 25 new computers.

Place: Sundial School

Time: 8:00pm sharp

Price: NAF. 18 or US \$10

Tickets available at St. Dominic High School and from the staff and students.

Saturday, February 7

TEENS OF COMEDY

organised by Andrew Dick. Proceeds to Andrew Dick Show.

Special guest: Fernando Clark.

Place: Phillipsburg Cultural and Community Center

Time: 8:00-10:00pm

Price: US \$5 in advance, \$10 at the door.

Tickets available at Photo Gums and Van Dorp.

Saturday, February 7

PRE-ARUBA 50TH CARNAVAL DANCE

organised by Chuchuli Foundation. DJ Ruby. Aruba 50th Carnival T-shirts will be on sale. Everyone travelling to Aruba must have this St. Maarten-Aruba Carnival T-shirt.

Place: Senior Citizens Recreational Center

Time: 9:00pm to 3:00am

Price: NAF. 10 or US \$5

Saturday, February 7

and Sunday, February 8

CLASSICAL BALLET:

LA FILLE MAL GARDEE

Presented by the classical ballet students of Motiance Dance School.

Place: Malo Casino Royale Theater

Schedule: Saturday, 8:00pm; Sunday, 6:00pm

Price: Adults US \$15, children under 12 years \$10.

Tickets available from the dancers and at Van Dorp. The Giftbox at Le Grand Marché Shopping Center, CD Mania, and Brasserie in Marigot.

Notices

B-Class Basketball Meeting

All basketball teams that want to participate in the B-Class of the St. Maarten Basketball Association are advised that they should send a representative to a meeting at L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium, Wednesday, February 4, 6:00pm.

United Saint Martin Movement Meeting

United Saint Martin Movement (USM) invites all members and well-wishers to an important meeting where the situation of the movement and other serious issues will be discussed, at Beach Plaza Hotel in Sandy Ground, Thursday, February 5, 7:00pm sharp. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Red Cross Meeting

The St. Maarten Red Cross informs Junior Brigades that there will be a very important meeting at Red Cross Headquarters, #34 Airport Boulevard, Simpson Bay, on Thursday, February 5, 5:30pm. Activities for the year 2004 will be discussed. Please make an extra effort to attend.

The St. Maarten Red Cross informs the general public that the Basic First Aid Course will start on Monday, February 16, 7:00-9:00pm. Interested persons are asked to call tel. 551-4357, fax 455-2333, or e-mail redcross@slntmaarten.net for more information.

ACT Test

The ACT test is scheduled to be given at The International School of St. Maarten on Oyster Pond Road, Saturday, February 7, 10 to register, call 543-7985.

United Playchool Foundation Meeting

United Playchool Foundation will hold its first general meeting for directors of all playchools in St. Maarten, at Phillipsburg Jubilee Library, Monday, February 9, 7:00pm. You will be given vital information. Come and be part of the planning in making your center ready for the transitional period of day care center to Foundation Based Education. Please be on time so you can hear everything we have to say.

Cake Crafters Meeting

Cake Crafting Friends Foundation announces its monthly meeting at Auror's Shop, Cannegieter Street next to Plaza 21, Friday, February 6, 8:00pm.

Guyanese Foundation Meeting

St. Maarten Guyanese Foundation will hold a general members meeting to elect a new board to succeed the current interim board, at the WIFOL Building, Saturday, February 7, 7:30pm. Nominations for president, vice president and five board members may be submitted in writing to the secretary prior to the meeting or may be made at the meeting. Only members whose dues have been paid up to January may vote.

United Pentecostal Church Revival

United Pentecostal Church, Nazareth Road #4, Lower Prince's

Quarter, announces four nights of revival, Sunday-Wednesday, February 8-11, 6:00pm Sunday, then 7:30pm nightly.

Pathways Of Hope Crusade

The Seventh Day Adventists churches in St. Maarten/St. Martin invite the general public to their Pathways of Hope Crusade on L.B. Scott Road, next to Emilio Wilson Park, with evangelist Royston Philbert, Sunday-Friday, February 8-13, 7:15pm nightly.

SCDF Announcement

St. Maarten Caribbean Development Foundation informs all booth holders that registration will close on Monday, February 16. Old booth holders are advised to register by this date or they will lose their booths for Carnival 2004. Potential new booth holders should also register by February 16 to be considered for a booth. Register with Michael Granger or Fabiana Arnell at 522-5133 or 523-4131.

Safe Haven Needs Volunteers

Safe Haven Foundation is looking for volunteers. If you are reliable and committed to helping your community, call the Safe Haven office at 177 and join the next training session.

Pony League Registration

Pony Baseball/Softball League registration takes place daily at the Pony League office, Cannegieter Street 93, Phillipsburg, 8:00am to 5:00pm, or at Rue de Hollande 57, Marigot, after 6:00pm. Players or sponsors who wish to sponsor a team are urged to register before February 15. For additional information, call St. Martin Pony League, tel. 542-2121 or 0590-295469, or fax 542-5796 or 0590-295469.

October Mid-Term Break Cruise For Families/Children

St. Maarten Children's Club Foundation is again organising its Mid-Term Break/Vacation Programme. This time it is going to be a cruise. For more information, call 552-1212.

St. Maarten Little League Registration

Registration for the 2004 Little League baseball and softball season is open at the Little League Stadium, Mondays-Fridays, 3:00-5:00pm, and Saturdays, 10:00am to 5:00pm. Baseball, ages 5-18; softball, ages 9-14. After school training sessions weekdays, 3:00-5:00pm, and Saturdays, 12:00-5:00pm. Practice for the Pee Wees and beginners is on Saturdays, 9:00-11:30am.

Pony League Practice

The St. Martin Pony Baseball/Softball League Foundation reminds all girls that practice sessions for the upcoming Eastern Caribbean Youth Softball Tournament to be held in Anguilla March 26-28 take place at the French Quarter field every Saturday and Sunday, 10:00am to 12:00 noon.

Soup Kitchens

The Cole Bay Seventh Day Adventist Church soup kitchen provides a free hot meal and free blood pressure screening by medical students of American University of the Caribbean at the church, behind Peking Supermarket on Welfare Road, to persons in our community who are in need, once a week on Sundays, 12:00-2:00pm.

The New Testament Baptist Church soup kitchen provides a free lunch at the church in Phillipsburg to anyone in need, Monday-Friday, 12:00-2:00pm.

TV Programme "The Law In Focus"

Foundation Focus invites the general public to tune in to "The Law In Focus," an informative TV programme for the entire family dealing with legal topics, on St. Maarten Cable TV Channel 15 every Thursday, 9:30-10:00pm.

Home Away From Home Foundation Seeking Members

Home Away From Home Day Care Center Foundation is taking applications for Seniors to become members. Quality care and supervision given to the Seniors Mondays, 10:00am to 4:00pm. They can socialise in a relaxed atmosphere and take part in activities and recreation. Seniors interested in the programme may register now and become members of the center for its five days weekly programme. For more information, call 556-1336, 522-7974 or 543-2027.



Paragon, (center) captained by Jurgen Epple was to challenge PlayStation (right) in an around the island race during the 23rd St. Maarten Heineken Regatta in an effort to establish a new record. Paragon had equipment problems and had to withdraw. This year in the 24th Heineken regatta, Paragon 60-foot long and 54-foot wide trimaran will try to best the record PlayStation, owned by Steve Fossett, set last year.

Trimaran Paragon prepares for around island record

SIMPSON BAY—The trimaran Paragon may make a run at the around the island speed record during the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta in March.

Owned by Jurgen Epple, the 60-foot-long and 54-foot-wide racer was scheduled to face PlayStation in an around the island encounter last year.

However, the pending war in Iraq coupled with equipment problems prevented Paragon from competing.

"Work on Paragon is in progress," said Epple. "The plan is to race."

He continued, "We definitely would like to go for a record run."

Epple successfully sailed Paragon in the around the island race two years ago. Paragon rounded the island in 3 hours 12 minutes and 11 seconds.

The old record set two years earlier by Bat out of Hell was 3:12. However, Bat out of Hell sailed just around the island. Heineken organizers have extended the course by about four miles to make the race a little longer.

PlayStation, a 125-foot catamaran, sailed the Heineken course in 2 hours 36 minutes and 2 seconds last year.

PlayStation's top speed during the race was recorded as 27 knots. PlayStation is capable of going 39 knots, ac-

cording to record setter and owner Steve Fossett. According to captain and crew, PlayStation was unable to reach top speed due to the heavy traffic on the waters around the island, as more than 200 boats competed in the regatta and dozens more boats were expected to watch the event.

Epple missed the Friday around the island race. A money market manager, he was forced to cut short his holiday in St. Maarten and deal with the financial shuffle of investors as America prepared for war.

He flew to St. Maarten on Saturday. Heineken race organizers arranged a special around the island race for the two boats.

Epple believed he had a real chance at defeating PlayStation. Paragon is able to sustain speeds up to 26 knots. Although PlayStation is faster on the straight afloat, Paragon can turn on a dime. She has little draft and Epple expected to be able to run close to the island, avoiding heavy chop normally associated with the Anguilla channel. By sailing a shorter course, Epple felt he had a chance.

As the two boats prepared for the start of their private race, disaster struck. Paragon suffered equipment failure. Something broke. As

Paragon prepared for her start the line that controls the traveller snapped and the roller fell for the headsail jammed. Epple had to withdraw.

Fossett went on to set a new record. PlayStation rounded the Friendly Island in 2 hours 4 minutes and 36 seconds.

Paragon, which sits at anchor in Simpson Bay Lagoon, has been repaired. Epple hopes to race in the 24th edition of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta March 5-7. He also hopes to break the around the island speed record, even if he is a year late in doing so.

Paragon is no stranger to around the island records. When she was owned by Michael Whipp and sailed by British Olympic Gold Medalist Rodney Pattinson, she blistered the waters around the Isle of Wight in England in 1986. She stayed in front of some 1,500 other boats and in the process set a new record of 3 hours 55 minutes and 13 seconds.

The record stood for 15 years.

B-division basketball reps to meet today

PHILIPSBURG—Team representatives interested in competing in the St. Maarten Basketball Association B-division tournament will meet at L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium tonight at 6:00pm.

The B-division, though geared to athletes 19 and under, is an open class for athletes who do not play in the senior league.

"There is no age limit in the B-division," said bas-

Nagico Trotters win, advance to finals

PHILIPSBURG—The Nagico Trotters have advanced to the St. Maarten basketball A-division finals.

The Trotters defeated the Intermar Razorbacks 76-73 at L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium last night. The Trotters overcame a third quarter 16-point deficit to secure a spot in the final. The victory was the third win for the Trotters in the best of five series.

The Trotters will face the winners of the Sunz versus Dutch Quarter semifinal. The Sunz can wrap up that series Thursday. If the Sunz win, the championship series will begin Friday.

If Dutch Quarter wins, they will face the Sunz in the deciding match Friday and the playoffs will begin next week.

Last night, the Trotters gained the early advantage but were not able to hang on. At the end of the first quarter the Trotters were up 15-13. By the half the Razorbacks had a five-point lead. The score was 28-23.

The Razorbacks were hot in the third. They opened up a 16-point lead. The third ended 55-39.

The Trotters were still down by 10 with just under five minutes to play in the

game. The squad went into a full court press and rallied to win by three.



Dean Sterling of the Nagico Trotters goes up to shoot in last night's semifinal match against the Intermar Razorbacks. The Trotters won the game to advance to the championship round.

Cay Bay Star volunteers bring netball to schools

PHILIPSBURG—The Cay Bay Stars Netball Club continues its drive to revitalize the sport in St. Maarten.

Club volunteers began teaching netball to students of Reverend John A. Gumbs Campus of the Methodist Agogic Center School, in Betty's Estate, in mid-January. The programme is being taught as part of the school's physical education course.

The club will begin teaching netball at the Seventh Day

Adventist School in Cole Bay today. The programme will be taught at the school twice a week.

Netball was invented by James Naismith in 1891 at Springfield College in Massachusetts. Two teams of seven players shoot a ball at the opposing team's goal, or basket.

The game is similar to basketball, as basketball is believed to have developed from netball.

There are two noticeable differences between basketball and netball. The first is the lack of a backboard. Netball shooters must fire the ball through the ring without the aid of a board.

The second difference between the two games is passing. In basketball, the athletes can pass or dribble. In netball only passing is allowed.

A third, more subtle, difference is the fact that only two players from each team are allowed to shoot the ball. Yet another difference is the fact that netball is traditionally played by women.

There are only two netball teams in St. Maarten. The lack of a youth programme marked the demise of the sport in St. Maarten. Even the St.

Maarten Netball Association has ceased to function.

Now the Cay Hill Club is now trying to build a team for the future and save the sport they love.

Futsal to be reorganized, competition to be planned

PHILIPSBURG—Johnny Singh, Norbert Graves and Simone Schut are spearheading a drive to revive futsal, also known as indoor soccer.

The trio is asking all futsal teams to contact them in an effort to reorganize the association's board and start the annual competition.

The sports organization flourished last year when Schut, the president, became Ill. Secretary Richard Boyd attempted to keep the organization functional. He called several team representative meetings. Not enough teams attended to make the meetings official.

Teams are asked to contact Singh at 551-1892, Schut at 522-4337 or Graves at 557-6279.

Windward and Leeward teams arrive for Carib cricket

PHILIPSBURG—Members of the Windward Islands Cricket team were the first to arrive on St. Maarten yesterday.

Some of the athletes flew in around lunchtime. The Leewards team arrived in time for dinner. The remaining athletes are due in today.

The two teams will face each other in the Carib Beer Cricket series this weekend. The pair are among eight teams competing in the regional first class cricket com-

petition.

Both teams are hungry. Both need a win on St. Maarten if they hope to advance to the semifinals.

The teams have already completed four of the seven rounds of play. Barbados is in first place with four wins. Trinidad and Tobago is second with two wins and two draws. West Indies B team is sitting in the third position. They have won two and lost two.

The Windward team is currently fifth behind Jamaica.

Windwards have one win, two losses and a draw. Leewards are in bad shape. They have yet to win a match. They have one loss, two draws and one no-result.

The Windwards will face Leewards in a four-day match at the Caribbe Lumber Ballpark beginning Friday. After St. Maarten, Windwards will face Kenya, currently in sixth place, in the sixth round February 12 to 15 and the West Indies B team in round seven February 19 to 22.

The Leewards have a tougher schedule. After taking on Windwards in round five here, the squad faces Barbados in St. Thomas and finishes the seventh round against fourth ranked Jamaica at Jamaica.

The Windwards had been expected to visit the pitch yesterday afternoon. However, dark clouds and slight drizzle forced the athletes to remain at their hotel, Divi Little Bay Resort and rest.

At the Caribbe Lumber Ballpark, dozens of workers were busy finalizing the field for the upcoming match. The new scoreboard, donated by Carib Beer, was being put in place. The grass was being cut one last time and the pitch was being watered.

Both teams are expected to practice today. The Windwards have the pitch in the morning from 9:00 to 11:00am.



Robert Pantophlet of the Pioneers grabs the rebound as Mid Ranger Andrew Richardson attempts to swat the ball in the veteran division semifinal match at L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium last night.

Pioneers come from behind, knot semifinal series 2-2

PHILIPSBURG—The Pioneers are just one win away from advancing to the St. Maarten Basketball Association veteran division finals.

The Pioneers came from behind to defeat the Mid Rangers at L.B. Scott Sports Auditorium last night. The Pioneers were down 2-0 in the best of five series. The Pioneers won their second straight game in the semifinals to knot the series at two.

The Pioneers won 66-62. Game five is scheduled for Thursday. Tip off is set for 7:00pm.

The Mid Rangers won game one 71-70. They took game two 59-58. The Pioneers bounced back to take game three 54-49.

Last night the Pioneers started the game cold. They missed dozens of shots. The Mid Rangers capitalized on the poor marksmanship and took an early lead. Slowly the Pioneers warmed up. By the half, the Mid Rangers lead had been cut to one point. The score was 33-32.

The veteran division only plays two 20-minute halves.

The Pioneers continued to miss shots, but slowly they gained an advantage. The Mid Rangers panicked. They tried to increase the tempo of the game. They stopped driving to the rim and switched to the long ball shot. Mid Ranger Steve Cartwright went two for nine from the 3-point line.

Now it was the Pioneers turn to capitalize on turnovers. They completed several fast breaks and went on to win. Robert Pantophlet and Leo Cocks both hit for 13 points for the Pioneers. Pantophlet also had seven rebounds.

Eversley Baptist scored 12 points for the Pioneers and had six rebounds while James Busby added 10 points to the winning tally.

Edward Brooks was the top scorer for the Mid Rangers. He had 19 points. David Brooks double-doubled for the Rangers. He hit for 12 and rebounded 10. Andrew Richardson, who usually top scores for the Rangers only, had 11 points and eight rebounds.

The winner of the Pioneers versus Mid Rangers series will advance to the finals and face the Cable TV Cagers. The Cagers defeated the Snipers in the straight to move on to the finals.



Workers spray down the pitch at Caribbe Lumber Ballpark in preparation for the fifth round Carib Beer Cricket series match between Windwards and Leewards that begins here Friday.

Road Runners test fitness with Cooper 12-minute run

PHILIPSBURG—The St. Maarten Road Runners will conduct their monthly Cooper Fitness Test at Raoul Illidge Sports Complex today.

The test, a 12-minute run around the 400-meter-long track, is a method of measuring an athlete's fitness. The athlete's run is timed. Once the 12 minutes are up, the distance covered is re-

corded. The athlete can then compare the distance to past tests or to a standards chart.

A distance of 2,800 meters for a male 30, or under or 2,200 to 2,700 meters for a female the same age, is considered good. Average would be 2,000 to 2,400 meters for a man and 1,800 to 2,200 meters for a woman.

The Road Runners conduct the free test the first

Wednesday of the month. Warmup starts at 5:15pm. The test starts at 5:30pm.

The top male runner last month was Steve Duzanson. In 12 minutes he covered 3,150 meters.

The Road Runners' next race will be the Pump and Run scheduled for February 21 to 22.

Kidd, O'Neal head list of All Star reserves

NEW YORK—New Jersey Nets guard Jason Kidd and Los Angeles Lakers center Shaquille O'Neal head the list of players named as reserves by the NBA on Tuesday for the 2004 All-Star Game.

Kidd and O'Neal were among the 14 players chosen by the NBA's 29 coaches to serve as replacements to the starting lineups, chosen by fans and announced last week, for the game on February 15 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

The coaches were asked to vote for seven players in their respective conferences. They were not allowed to vote for players from their own team.

First-time All Stars Ron Artest of Indiana, Michael Redd of Milwaukee, Kenyon Martin of New Jersey and Jamaal Magloire of New Orleans will join Kidd, Boston's Paul Pierce and New Orleans' Baron Davis on the Eastern Conference team.

First-timers Sam Cassell of Minnesota and Utah's Andrei Kirilenko join O'Neal, Dallas's Dirk Nowitzki, Peja Stojakovic and Brad Miller of Sacramento and Seattle's Ray Allen on the Western Conference team.

MARINO

Continued from page 36

he could not be reached, and it was believed Marino was traveling in New York to tape a Super Bowl wrap-up show for HBO's Inside the NFL.

"I have decided that it would not be in the best interests of either my family or the Dolphins to assume the role as the team's senior vice president of football operations," Marino said in a statement released by the team. Marino played for the Dolphins from 1983-99 and took them to the 1985 Super Bowl, which they lost to San Francisco. He holds NFL records with 61,361 yards passing and 41,231 touchdown passes.

He planned to leave his analyst jobs at CBS Sports



Detroit Pistons' forward Ben Wallace (3) drives around Cleveland Cavaliers' forward Carlos Boozer (1) in the first half of the NBA game at The Palace in Auburn Hills, Michigan, on Tuesday.

NBA Roundup

Knicks take game to new level against the Pacers

NEW YORK—Isiah Thomas' old team ran into his new one, and the team he now runs outplayed the one he formerly coached.

Two of Thomas' acquisitions, Penny Hardaway and Stephon Marbury, made several big plays down the stretch Tuesday night to lead the New York Knicks past the Pacers 97-90, ending Indiana's three-game winning streak. This was a measuring stick game for the Knicks as they try to climb to .500 and qualify for the postseason, and they gave

one of their better performances of Thomas' six-week tenure as team president.

Hardaway had 14 points, including a clinching jumper with 17.2 seconds remaining, and Marbury had 23 points and eight assists. Keith Van Horn outplayed Ron Artest at small forward and had 20 points, 12 rebounds, three assists and two blocked shots, and Kurt Thomas added 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Artest had 19 points for the Pacers, who were coached by Thomas the past three seasons. Thomas was fired in August by new team president Larry Bird, and this was his former team's first time playing in his presence since they were eliminated in the first round of the playoffs last spring.

"I don't know the specific dynamics of how our team will react or what they're thinking," Indiana coach Rick Carlisle said beforehand. "I do know they have a lot of respect for Isiah, as he and for how hard he worked here for three years. I know there will be a lot of competitive juices flowing out there."

Indeed there were, with the Knicks counting hardest when it came most.

| Other NBA results: | | |
|--------------------|------------|---------|
| T'wolves | - Magic | 113-100 |
| Mavs | - Warriors | 107-93 |
| Pistons | - Cavs | 82-85 |

Adrian Mutu stands out from the crowd at cosmopolitan Chelsea

LONDON—With his sharp suit, shiny black mock croch shoes and twinkling diamond earstuds, Adrian Mutu stands out in a crowd of dressed-down English, Dutch and German soccer players.

On the pitch, Chelsea's Romanian forward also aims to make an impression, trying to do something different to please the fans. "I like to be creative and entertain. Sometimes it comes off, sometimes it doesn't," Mutu told Reuters in an interview before a sponsorship function.

"Sometimes I choose the complicated route, when I should be simpler. With more experience I'll maybe get the choices right," he says with a disarming smile.

It was the 25-year-old's jinking runs, ball skills and wizardry in front of goal that brought him to Chelsea coach Claudio Ranieri's attention. Mutu is happiest dropping behind an out-and-out striker and working the ball goalswards. "I like to be judged as much by assists as goals," he said.

When Russian Roman Abramovich bought his millions to the club last July, the Romanian was one of the first targets of his \$180-million spending spree. Mutu, who had been made captain of Parma and scored 22 league and cup goals in a highly successful season with the Italian side, had little hesitation in agreeing the move.

"Everyone was talking about Chelsea because they were making inquiries about all the big names in Europe. I saw they were creating a great team, a winning team. I was happy at Parma but I took my chance because I wanted success," Mutu said.

An acrimonious break-up with his television presenter wife Alexandra Dinu probably helped his decision to move, though he still returns "when I have time free" to see his 16-month-old son Marino.

The Romanian, sold for some \$25 million to become his country's most expensive player, enjoyed a dream start in London scoring four times in Chelsea's first three league games. He found settling in easy.

"I prefer playing in England," he said. "The game does not keep stopping here and I like the flow. In Italy the referee blows his whistle for everything—maybe 50 times there for every 15 in England." He scoffs at suggestions that the English game can be too physical. "It's a man's game. If you don't like it you should go and play something else."

Mutu played in Italy for four seasons after transferring to Inter Milan from Dinamo

Bucharest. He had a miserable time at the Milan club, failing to earn a regular place.

"Maybe I went a bit soon to Inter. I wasn't trendy and didn't have enough experience," he said.

Failure at Inter was assuaged by Romania's performance at the European championship in Belgium and the Netherlands in 2000 when they beat England in the first round before losing to Italy in the quarter-finals. The win over England rates as the most

Crespo who also arrived from Italy and to his captain, Frenchman Marcel Desailly, who used to play for AC Milan.

English is, however, the lingua franca at Chelsea and after lessons Mutu's comprehension has improved. He plans to start reading more English novels to help him along. "I like cinema and I like to read," he said. "At the moment I'm reading Dostoyevsky's The Idiot—in translation."



Blackburn's Lucas Neill (on floor) slides in on Chelsea's Adrian Mutu in this recent file photo.

memorable match he has played but Chelsea's 4-0 drubbing of Lazio in the Champions League last year was also very satisfying.

"To take on an Italian club on their turf is pretty tough, then to beat them 4-0 is very special," he said.

Mutu's Italian is near flawless and helped him flow the first few awkward weeks while Chelsea's newly acquired pool of international talent learned how to communicate. He could at least speak to his coach, to Argentinians Seba Veron and Hernan

Snappys dressing aside, Mutu is keen to avoid being seen as just another one-dimensional sportsman with no youth and no culture. Both his parents were teachers and he says he would have studied law had football not intervened.

Though retirement is a long way off Mutu is quite sure he will do something different when he hangs up his boots. He would like, he says, to use his intellect.

Chelsea fans might say he does that pretty well already on the pitch at Stamford Bridge.

AZ Alkmaar sign Tilburg trio

AMSTERDAM—AZ have agreed four-year deals with Willem II defenders Joris Mathijsen and Kew Jallens and midfielder Tarkenton from the end of the season, the Dutch first division club said on Tuesday.

The trio, joining on free transfers, will link up again with Alkmaar coach Co Adriaanse and technical director Martin van Geel, who were previously at Tilburg. Alkmaar are fourth in the table, 13 points behind leaders Ajax and chasing a place in Europe. Tilburg are seventh, four points further adrift.

"This is a welcome reinforcement," said Van Geel. "With these signings we will try to realise our ambition, to create a steady position at the top of the league and try to qualify for Europe."

Middlesbrough edge through to British League Cup final

LONDON—An own goal by Arsenal's new Spanish signing Jose Antonio Reyes helped Middlesbrough through to the League Cup final with a tense 2-1 victory in their semi-final, second leg match on Tuesday.

The victory at the Riverside gave 'Boro, who have never won a major trophy, a 3-1 aggregate win and they will play Bolton Wanderers in the final at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff on February 29.

Premier league leaders Arsenal fielded a weakened team and had defender Martin Keown sent off just before halftime for a professional foul. Dutchman Bouweijn Zenden gave Middlesbrough the lead after 69 minutes. Brazilian Edu equalised for Arsenal with a header but Reyes' own goal secured Middlesbrough's long-suffering fans their ticket to Cardiff.

Middlesbrough, who lost in the League Cup final in 1997 and 1998, have waited 128 years for a piece of silverware.

"We've been so close before and we're there again," manager Steve McClaren told Sky Sports television. "It's going to be a fantastic day out for the fans but the players have got a job to do. The players were magnificent, absolutely fantastic."

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger left out Thierry Henry, Dennis Bergkamp, Robert Pires and Freddie Ljungberg, although captain Patrick Vieira returned to stiffen the midfield.

However, Middlesbrough dominated the first half. Italian striker Massimo Maccarone fired one chance wastefully wide and was then denied by a fine reaction save from Arsenal's reserve goalkeeper Graham Stack.

On the stroke of halftime Arsenal did their cause no good when Keown clumsily pulled down the Italian and earned a straight red card, the 54th Arsenal dismissal in Wenger's seven-and-a-half year reign.

Reyes vainly claimed a penalty straight after halftime when he went down under a challenge from Boro keeper Mark Schwarzer. Schwarzer then blocked a Kolo Toure shot on the line but Arsenal went behind when Gaizka Mendieta touched a deft through ball for Zenden who dinked the ball over Stack.

The visitors, whose last League Cup triumph was in 1993, hit back quickly, with Edu netting after Vieira's

header rebounded off the post eight minutes later.

However, 'Boro killed the Londoners off five minutes from the end when Reyes tried to tackle Stuart Pearce but succeeded only in diverting the ball into his own net for an unfortunate first goal for his new club.

Wenger said he thought Reyes should have had a penalty but was pleased with the way his 10-man team battled. "I'm very proud of the players, they gave absolutely everything but things turned a little bit against us," said the Frenchman.

"They (Middlesbrough) tried to cut the fluency of our game and they did it well."



Arsenal's new player Jose Antonio Reyes of Spain (2nd L) is brought down by Middlesbrough goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer of Australia (2nd R), as teammates Gareth Southgate (L) and Chris Riggott look on, during their League Cup semi-final, second leg soccer match at The Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough, on Tuesday.

Baptista in Brazil squad for Ireland game, Rivaldo absent

RIO DE JANEIRO—Sevilla midfielder Julio Baptista was called up by Brazil for the first time on Tuesday for the friendly against Ireland in Dublin on February 18.

However, striker Rivaldo has been left out of the squad as he will be playing in the Libertadores Cup for his Brazilian club Cruzeiro.

Coach Carlos Alberto Parreira picked 20 European-based players and only two playing in Brazil—World Cup-winning goalkeeper Marcos of Palmeiras and forward Luis Fabiano of Sao Paulo.

The absence of Rivaldo, the former world player of the year who recently returned to play in Brazil for the first time in seven years after being released by AC Milan, will disappoint Irish fans. The squad does include midfielders Kaka of AC Milan and Kleberson of Manchester United. Barcelona forward Ronaldinho and Real Madrid striker Ronaldo.

The game in Dublin is part of Brazil's preparations for the World Cup qualifier against Paraguay on March 30.



India's Rahul Dravid leaps into the air to play a shot against Zimbabwe during their triangular series one-day international in Perth, on Tuesday.

Wales lose bid to remove Russia from Euro 2004

LONDON—Wales have failed in their bid to have Russia removed from the finals of Euro 2004 because of Yegor Titov's failed drug test, European soccer's governing body UEFA said on Tuesday.

The 27-year-old Spartak Moscow captain tested positive for the banned substance Broomantane after Russia drew 0-0 with Wales in the first leg of their Euro 2004 playoff in Moscow in November.

Russia won the second leg 1-0 a week later in Cardiff to

qualify for the tournament in Portugal, but the Football Association of Wales (FAW) complained they should have been awarded a 3-0 win because Titov, who was an unused substitute in the first leg, should not have been eligible to play. Titov has since been banned by UEFA for one year, although his club has appealed on behalf of the midfielder.

"In reviewing the case the UEFA Control and Disciplinary Body made reference to the Welsh FA's failure to provide evidence that the

player was under the influence of a prohibited substance in the second leg," UEFA said in a statement. "In any case, any punishment for a doping offence applied to the individual player and not to the whole team."

The FAW said they would sit down with their legal and medical advisors to examine grounds for appealing the decision before UEFA's deadline of midnight on Friday. "Coach Mark Hughes and myself are very disappointed that UEFA have decided not to make a stance

against Russia as one of their players tested positive for drugs," FAW general secretary David Collins said on Sky Sports on Tuesday.

Alexander Tukmanov, executive director of the Russian Football Union, told Reuters that he felt the decision was justified. "I think in the end the sporting principles prevailed over all else," he said. "After all, we beat Wales on the field of play and that's why we feel we have earned the right to go to the finals."

Pathan, Laxman combine to demolish Zimbabwe

MELBOURNE—Young seamer Irfan Pathan took a career-best four for 24 as India bowled Zimbabwe out for 135 before stuttering to a four-wicket win in their one-day triangular series encounter in Perth on Tuesday.

Vangipurappu Laxman, who has made three centuries in the triangular series against Australia and Zimbabwe, took four catches at second slip, one short of the world record set by South Africa's Jonty Rhodes against West Indies 10 years ago.

Stuart Madsenkeyer top-scored with 36 during a Zimbabwe innings which lasted just 34.4 overs on the fast and bouncy WACA Ground wicket.

The match was of limited significance, with India and

Australia already qualified for the best-of-three final. But the 19-year-old Pathan took his chance immediately after being mauled by Australia twice during the first two for 69 from eight overs.

The left-arm, playing his eighth one-day international, dismissed both Zimbabwe openers in the first over. Vusi Sibanda was caught by Laxman for a duck and Tendata Ndaba played around an inswinger and was bowled first ball.

Dion Ebrahim was caught by Laxman off Pathan for seven to leave the touring side reeling at 11 for three in the seventh over.

Left-handers Irfan Pathan and Stuart Carlisle steadied matters with a 63-run partnership for the fourth wicket

before the innings folded. Ray Price was Pathan's last victim, caught without scoring by Laxman.

India struggled to 115 for six in 26.4 overs, Sachin Tendulkar falling to Heath Streak for just three, before Hemang Badani and Pathan added the required 21 runs, with the winning boundary coming in the 31st over.

Left-hander Badani top-scored for India with a patient 34. Laxman made 32 before he was hit on the chest by a Sean Ervine bouncer and the ball dropped onto his stumps.

India rested skipper Sourav Ganguly, Ajit Agarkar and Murali Kartik before the start of the final series on Friday in Melbourne. Zimbabwe finished without a win from eight matches.

SPORTS ARENA



Dodgers express interest in Greg Maddux

LOS ANGELES—The Dodgers have expressed interest in Greg Maddux, with pitching coach Jim Colborn speaking with the future Hall of Fame right-hander and manager Jim Tracy talking to his brother.

The conversations were confirmed Tuesday by a baseball source who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Maddux, who turns 38 in April, has won 289 major league games, including 15 or more in a record 16 straight seasons. He was 16-11 with a 3.96 ERA for the Atlanta Braves last year, then became a free agent.

Tracy and Colborn made the calls at the behest of general manager Dan Evans to gauge Maddux's interest in pitching for the Dodgers, the source said. Evans refused comment on the matter, citing his policy concerning potential personnel moves, and Tracy and Colborn could not be reached.

The Chicago Cubs made a two-year offer to Maddux last month and remain interested. General manager Jim Hendry said Tuesday he hasn't given Maddux or agent Scott Boras a deadline and plans to speak with Boras this week.

"We're just talking to four, five teams and are waiting to see," Boras said Tuesday.

Maddux pitched for the Cubs from 1986-92 before joining the Braves as a free agent. Colborn worked for the Cubs during Maddux's time there and Maddux's brother, Mike, pitched for the Dodgers in 1999, when Tracy was the team's bench coach.



The Miami Dolphins have confirmed that former quarterback Dan Marino resigned as senior vice president just three weeks after accepting the position, on Tuesday.

Marino does U-turn, quits as Dolphins VP

MIAMI—Dan Marino's visit was a surprise to Wayne Huizenga. The purpose of it was even more stunning.

Five weeks removed from asking for an executive position with the Miami Dolphins and only three weeks after accepting the senior vice president job created solely for him, Marino resigned Tuesday and left the team he quarterbacked for 17 seasons.

As recently as Sunday, Marino denied reports saying he was having second thoughts about assuming control of the Dolphins' football operations. But at 2:45 p.m. Tuesday, he made

an unannounced visit to Huizenga's office and quit, spurning attempts the owner made to change his mind.

"I heard about it on the television a couple of days ago, but I didn't believe it," Huizenga said. "Needless to say, we're disappointed. Dan is a great guy and we like him a lot. He would have been good for this organization."

A telephone message left at Marino's home was not returned. A woman who answered the phone and refused to give her name said

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Carter turns on afterburners to help Raptors crush 76ers

PHILADELPHIA—Vince Carter had 15 of his 33 points in the fourth quarter to lead the Toronto Raptors to a 93-80 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers on Tuesday night.

Donyell Marshall had 15 points and 14 rebounds, while Jalen Rose had 13 for the Raptors, who ended a two-game losing skid. Former Sixers player Jerome Moiso added 10 points and 11 rebounds, both season highs.

Allen Iverson had 36 points to lead the Sixers, who have lost nine of 11. Glenn Robinson added 18 and Kenny Thomas 15.

Carter had seven points on two jumpers and a 3-pointer during a 10-0 run that opened the fourth quarter and extended the Raptors' lead to 15. He scored eight more down the stretch, hitting two more jumpers, a fastbreak layup and two free throws to give him his most points since posting 35 on Dec. 12.

Toronto, already playing without starting point guard Alvin Williams, lost another starter when Chris Bosh was injured 45 seconds into the second half.

Bosh, a rookie first-rounder who also finished with 10 points, sprained his left ankle when he raced the length of the floor to block a layup attempt by Iverson. Bosh made the play from behind, then stepped on Iverson's foot when he landed.

Bosh immediately grabbed the ankle and laid on the ground for several minutes

before limping off the floor. X-rays were negative, but he did not return.

Iverson and Robinson had all but two of the team's 26 points in the first quarter as the Sixers took a three-point lead. The momentum and

to the floor, then got up holding the arm and headed straight to the locker room. He returned to the floor less than three minutes later.

With Iverson out of the game, the Raptors took their first lead with 8:02 left in the



Philadelphia 76ers guard Allen Iverson (L) shoots under pressure from the Toronto Raptors guard Vince Carter (R) during fourth quarter NBA action in Philadelphia, on Tuesday.

the lead shifted for good, though, when Iverson briefly left the game early in the second quarter.

Iverson injured his left elbow in a collision with Roger Mason while attempting a layup on a baseline drive under the basket. Iverson fell

second quarter when Bosh banked in a 14-footer. Bosh had six more points during the 17-3 run that helped

Toronto take a 44-37 halftime lead despite Iverson's 19 points.

Iverson has scored over 30 in four of the last five games.